new masses

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COUNTERATTACK!

SEE PAGE THREE

WHY TEACHER LEAVES SCHOOL by Charles Humboldt

HOW I BECAME A WRITER by Maxim Gorky

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just a minute

AFTER years of no truck with advertisers, the newspaper *PM* has discovered what an unhappy free-enterprising world this is. Consequently it has decided to accept advertising. This step created a turmoil in its offices, during which editor Ralph Ingersoll resigned while the others affirmed the continuing amateur standing of its editorial policies. All of which brings up our own feeling toward advertising. Having completely established our attitude toward the bourgeois world and its corrupt practices, we are in no danger of having our relations to our advertisers misunderstood, either by our readers *or* by our advertisers. "What advertisers?" you ask, and well you may. For anyone skimming through our pages might get the impression that advertising is something we are aloof about. Nothing, of course, is further from the truth. We have a charming advertising manager, Gertrude Chase, the year round. We value advertising highly, particularly the financial return, small as it is. Every dollar raised is a struggle, and if advertising can help us publish each week, so much the better. The utilities, especially the telephone company, which advertise in every college and club journal, tell us that they advertise with commercial publications (that's us) only when they are members of the ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulation). At least that's what they say. Also, it is rumored that it takes a large fee to become a member of the ABC, so the issue is still at deadlock.

However, if you know somebody who wants to tell our readers something in a commercial way as we are presently constituted, we will take the copy and print it. We also promise that none of our editors will walk out because of it.

THAT the Republican victory was due, among other things, to confusion over the issues was more apparent in some parts of the country than in others. Take the campaign for the state FEPC bill in California. There the confusion, spread by Republicans and helped along by the apathy of the Democrats, was obvious. The measure, known as Proposition 11, was attacked as a subversive plot in billboards appearing all over the city. Newspapers, speeches and throwaways warned the voters that "anyone believing himself held back by his color, his race, his religion, his national origin, or his ancestry, needs only to complain. The commission could force him into your job. Your employer would be subject to political investigators dictating whom he may hire and whom he may promote. . . . This political commission may discriminate against you." The spreaders of this unprincipled distortion, consisting of the Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis Clubs, the Republican Party, thus split the non-Mexican and non-Negro voters away from those groups whom the bill was designed to help. In order to compound the confusion further, the reactionary group called itself the "Committee For Tolerance."

HERBERT APTHEKER, an NM associate editor who rose from private to major, is the recipient of a Guggenheim Scholarship as a result of his war work. Dr. Aptheker, an authority on the history of the Negro in the United States, is presently to tour the country under NM's auspices to discuss the "Myth of Racial Superiority." Except for Minneapolis, where he will appear on November 11, 12 and 13, all Dr. Aptheker's lectures will be before student groups. He will speak at the Universities of Chicago on November 15, Wisconsin the 17th, Illinois the 18th, Wayne University in Detroit the 19th and Michigan State the 20th.

COMING soon in NEW MASSES: Eugene Konecky, author of *Monopoly Steals FM from the People*, has written an article which will bring you up to date on FM—and tell you what it is.

Other articles to appear in early issues include "Scientists Without Philosophy," by Dyson Carter; "Marxism and Freedom," by Rene Maublanc; "The Work of Sholem Aleichem," by Nathan Ausubel; "The Living Zola," by Louis Aragon; and a section of *The Young Guard*, a brilliant new Soviet novel by Alexander Fadeyev.

J. F.

new masses

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"WE SERVE NOTICE—THEY WON A BATTLE, BUT NOT A WAR"

By the Editors

TODAY, a bare several days past November 5th, the captains of reaction are exultantly striving to convince us that they are invincible. Herbert Hoover, his tory heart victoriously athrob after the battle, contends he has won a war. But we reply this was no Waterloo.

It would be fatuous indeed for anybody to underestimate reaction's victory. That is not our intention. What happened November 5th forecasts stormy weather for the millions of the Roosevelt generation, the multitudes of common men who have unalterably identified themselves with the Economic Bill of Rights and world peace.

But the people's leaders are not staggered. As this is written, they are meeting in Washington to reform ranks, to press the counter-offensive. Senator Pepper spoke for millions when he said: "We serve notice on the anti-democratic forces of America that they have won a battle but not a war. The fight will go on unabated." The editors of NEW MASSES endorse those words with every iota of our strength —the fight will go on unabated.

STILL, we know that the men of Wall Street will drive pell-mell to secure every advantage afforded them November 5th. Millions are asking "Will they be successful?" We of NEW MASSES contend that their success tomorrow is no more inevitable than it was yesterday, before Election Day. It was not in the stars that they had to win November 5th. The reasons for their victory are as ascertainable as a sum in arithmetic. The errors of the people's coalition can be spotted, diagnosed, eliminated. And the strategy to win can already be charted. The program and the men for a successful counter-offensive are available *now*. We intend, beginning with this statement, and continuing in forthcoming issues, to plumb all the factors in our political scene, appraise them objectively, project the basis upon which to retrieve the ground lost, and to advance at even greater tempo than before.

First and foremost, we believe that the American people, in their vast majority, continue to stand by the over-all objectives of the Roosevelt program. They aspire to the ideals of the Economic Bill of Rights. They want to live in one world liberated from the perpetual alarums of war. They abhor the boom-and-bust cycle; they reject the tin-shack mansions of Hooverville. We reject Herbert Hoover's estimate that the election returns represented a swing to the right by the American people.

We believe that the intention of most was to protest the trend of history away from the Roosevelt era, even though they expressed that protest in a confused, frustrated way. We believe that the millions who went to the polls, especially that decisive segment of our population, the independent voters, cast their ballots to protest the abandonment of these goals.

Had the majority of those who led the Roosevelt-labor-progressive coalition seen this clearly, had they pursued a strategy commensurate with that reality, results would have been totally different. And they can be different in the turbulent days to come.

HERE is evidence. We believe Rep. Vito Marcantonio's district is a microcosm of what could have happened throughout the land—and what can happen nationally, in 1948, if all the rich lessons of the 18th District are taken to heart.

Consider carefully: reaction saw Marcantonio as a symbol of all it abhorred. It feared him as it did no other candidate. It saw in him a man relentless in his pursuit of the Roosevelt ideal. A man who withstood, uncompromising, unflinching, every assault on the floor of Congress. And so every vituperation that could be drawn from the diseased master-minds of the GOP was fired at him.

That campaign acquired classic dimensions: those of us who have read Howard Fast's *The American* are immediately reminded of the similar Niagara of abuse that poured down upon the head of Governor Altgeld. The American Action Committee, those commando scouts of reaction, their knives sharpened and their faces camouflaged, publicly declared their intention to throw maximum effort into the defeat of the man from East Harlem. Every reactionary newspaper in the land threw its thunderbolts his way. Money flowed lavishly, imported hoodlums toted blackjacks, the poverty-stricken streets of East Harlem were pounded by the silk-stockinged feet of dowagers and society maidens. Reaction's political atom bomb, Red-baiting, was dropped on this district. Yet Marcantonio won. Why?

If the reasons are taken to heart, we can discern the pattern for victory tomorrow; we can understand how victory could have been won today, won November 5th.

Congressman Marcantonio waged a campaign that must stand as the model for all future activity of the Roosevelt-labor-progressive forces. What, in brief, did he do? What is the secret of his success? Sad to say, for us and the people generally, there was no "secret." All Marcantonio did was to stick to the issues—he did not cede an inch, he rejected every sidetracking blandishment. He campaigned on his record as a Congressman championing the issues Roosevelt represented. His record corroborated his words. And Harlem's people could well believe Henry Wallace's testimony that Marcantonio is the best Congressman in the nation.

Marc did not allow Red-baiting to swerve him from these issues. *The campaign was waged on the basis of an all-embracing unity which included everybody from Roosevelt Democrats to Communists.* Marc did not make the fatal error of the false distinction. He judged the Communists on the basis of their record; he did not allow his constituency to be sidetracked in irrelevant argument. He kept his eye on the ball, and so, therefore, did his constituents. And so he won. We saw a similar pattern in the campaign of Adam Clayton Powell, likewise an announced target of the American Action Committee. It is a victory pattern.

But it was not the total pattern of the people's forces in

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this election. Were it so, it would have spelled the difference between defeat and victory. And those who recognized that, who fought tirelessly for this pattern, most notably the Communists, made a historic contribution to the American people. The Communists continuously urged this approach in the months and weeks prior to the elections—summoning the people to unity against fascism and reaction, sparing nothing to build a people's coalition, based on labor. Their efforts advanced the unification of the working class and the people generally. And the gratitude of the voters is witnessed by the Communist Party vote in New York State—it doubled despite the campaign of Red-baiting and intimidation that was unparalleled in any previous election. This Communist vote, while adding strength to the broad progressive coalition, also expresses an increased interest in and support of socialism as the way the American people can ultimately stamp out poverty, reaction and war.

The American Labor Party, in New York State, likewise pursued this strategy. Its vote, too, reflected the indubitable logic of this approach—the ALP received one of the highest votes in its history, and emerged as a force around which all progressives and unionists can rally for the 1948 elections.

NO ESTIMATE of the election, no matter how brief or preliminary, can omit the role of the Truman administration. This proved a key factor in the outcome.

Had President Truman pursued his predecessor's policies, the result inevitably would have been different. But the President failed to measure up to history's requirements. Confronted with the violent onslaught of GOP reaction after Roosevelt's death, the man from Missouri surrendered to the plug-uglies in silk hats. Offering little more than futile verbal resistance, he permitted Taft's inflationary program to capture the land. Rendering lip-service to Roosevelt's ideas on the international front, he surrendered to the Vandenberg-Byrnes cabal, became totally identified with the atom bomb foreign policy. As a result, *he broke from the Roosevelt-labor-progressive coalition.* Had that formation stood firm, it would have repulsed reaction's assault as it had four times since 1932. But Truman's desertion dealt it a blow from which it failed to recover by November 5th.

The majority of Roosevelt Democrats, and too great a number of leaders in the camp of labor and the progressives, failed to draw the necessary conclusions. They did not dissociate themselves from Truman's defections. Instead, they hobbled myopically along as though somehow the electorate would believe the little man from Missouri was filling the shoes of the big man before him. Furthermore, Truman's defection required the adoption of most vigorous measures for unity. It required extraordinary measures; they did not even take ordinary ones. They should have exploded the concept of "bipartisanship" in foreign policy. They did not. They allowed themselves to be blackmailed. They should have demanded—as Roosevelt did—that the structure of America's postwar policy for peace be founded on the rock of American-Soviet friendship. They did not. Henry Wallace's corrective—though of world significance—came late in the campaign. As did the vitally significant Conference of Progressives in Chicago. Too late to repair the damage.

The times categorically demanded total rejection of the GOP's principal political weapon—Red-baiting. Instead, we witnessed the lamentable phenomenon of candidates like Senator Mead accepting the blindfold of Red-baiting handed him by Dewey. Thus the coalition candidate inevitably marched into the pitfall carefully laid for him by the people's enemies.

The times demanded that labor and the progressives cement their coalition—draw into it greater numbers of the middle classes and the working farmers. They did not.

Consequently the people, bearing genuine grievances, did not know where to turn. There was no solid Roosevelt-labor-progressive coalition on a national scale to which they could appeal, and for which they could crusade. Thus many fell prey to the unparallelled GOP demagogy. Some actually turned to the propaganda of "free enterprise" prosperity which promised them the sky and all the stars.

NOW the GOP will organize the House and Senate and the climactic assaults upon the people's interests will begin. These stern, stubborn facts will reveal the full truth to the electorate—will expose the conflict between their needs and the real plans of the GOP. A struggle will inevitably begin soon between the majority of the people and the GOP-big business interests.

No time dare be lost in charting the people's counter-offensive. Imperative is the need to achieve working unity of all wings of labor, the prerequisite for maximum cooperation with the middle classes and working farmers. Such a front can fend off the intensified assaults upon our political, economic and social standards. And can counterattack.

In the coming stormy days, such organizations as the Independent Citizens' Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions and the National Citizens'-PAC can achieve primary importance, particularly in mobilizing the middle class and professional groups—the strata from which reaction intends to gain allies. Millions in these sectors will begin to grope for leadership as hard times come on. The program to reach them emerged more clearly in the last stages of the campaign. It was particularly evident in the Chicago conference. That platform, properly projected, can result in a genuine, pro-Roosevelt presidential candidate for 1948—and *can secure that necessary political realignment which will result in a new mass people's party.*

In forthcoming issues NM will fill in this outline. Here, we wished to make these primary points: the *program* and the *men* are at hand. Only courage, and unyielding persistence, are necessary.

The people who stormed Iwo Jima, Makin and the beaches of Normandy did not lack these qualifications then. Nor will they tomorrow.

B. Golden.

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WHY TEACHER LEAVES SCHOOL

The clash between fact and theory makes a casualty of the teacher and his hope for the fulfillment of a decent educational program.

By CHARLES HUMBOLDT

LONG ago, when I was in 5A, we learned a song in assembly that enraged me:

I'm called little Buttercup, dear little Buttercup,
Though I could never tell why.

Neither could I. No one told us where the song came from or what it meant. My voice dried up with the humiliation of having to express the feelings of a sissy flower, and I hated Gilbert and Sullivan until very recently.

Last week I asked a New York teacher whether they still sing "Buttercup" without an explanation. "No," she said. "There are other things wrong with the system."

There has always been an element of the quixotic about education in my town. In the old days, it never seemed to matter that the kids didn't understand the poems they had to recite: "Thanatopsis," "To be or not to be." Later, the shortage of teachers did not prevent the Board of Education from denying hundreds of substitutes full status, so that it could pay them less and keep them in a perpetual turmoil of hopeless hope and tiring fear. Today the administration announces a brilliant, progressive learning program; but the schools are understaffed, the teachers underpaid, essential materials are missing and basic documents out of print. The Superintendent of Schools talks about the philosophy of education while conditions in many classrooms are such as to preclude the carrying out of the normal routine of teaching the 3 R's. The high aims of the profession do not keep tens of thousands from leaving it in disgust. Members of the Board of Education underline their faith in the system they supervise by sending their own children to private schools. Even teachers themselves are doing this with their children. The board issues a pamphlet on interracial problems, entitled "Unity through Understanding," in which the following words appear: "All races, all creeds, all individuals have a spiritual relationship in this democracy of ours, and because of this relationship, justice is a right and not a privilege." Whereupon it accepts without protest the appointment to its ranks of a supporter of Franco Spain and sponsor of Christian Front meetings. The board is famous for speaking like a lion and behaving like an aphid.

THERE is, however, one aspect of the school system which deserves a spotlight more than any other—the role of the teacher. Here all the contradictions come to a head, and here the gap between theory and actuality shows itself as disfiguring the entire scheme. Sometimes the paradox wears a mask of farce; often it is merely evil. Sometimes the teacher laughs; often the teacher nearly breaks down.

Let's go into this business of theory and actuality, or more simply, of words versus facts.

Some years ago, radical innovations began to be made in the theory of public school education. Progressive educators and teachers were drawn into the planning of a new way of teaching then called the activity program. I won't describe the program—parents are generally aware of its features—except to say that it called forth the initiative of the pupil and demanded much greater imagination on the teacher's part. Above all, it was designed to respect the individuality of each child, to encourage him to engage actively in the study and work that interested him most and for which he was most talented. A lot of the old stiffness and arbitrary discipline went out of education. In theory, at least. In any case, all forward-looking teachers greeted the plan with enthusiasm.

There was only one hitch. The plan meant more teachers, more materials, and more schools. In other words, more money. And here the bold board began to hem and haw, because my lord Big Taxpayer of Bank and Realty was against providing the money. Always faithful to their old slogan, "Eat cake and have it, too," the rich want to benefit from the workers' education, which supplies them with skilled and intelligent labor power, but they do not want to pay for it. The crusaders who are ready to teach democracy by hook and crook to the infidels of Europe and Asia rear up at the cost of teaching geometry to young Americans. It is only natural that they should be backed in their resolution by the governor, their knight *sans reproche*, Thomas Dewey. And it is therefore logical that the veterans who sat recently in Albany in judgment on the governor should link their demands for a place to live with the teachers' insistence that the legislature stop neglecting education in New York. They know that the same forces sabotage both housing and learning.

Open any handbook of the new curriculum in the city schools and you will find such phrases as this: "An obligation to rethink and reorganize classroom and school practices in harmony with principles of modern elementary education as expressed in the recommendations in this bulletin rests on every teacher and every supervisor." Then follows a series of "basic considerations," followed by a list of "objectives," then a check list of the application of principles (fifty-six of these), a detailed discussion of activities, work habits, etc., and finally a "helpful bibliography of some seventeen books." There are many of these pamphlets, intelligently written, well organized, entirely realizable, if—if. But let me describe an average teacher's day in an average New York City school. You will judge what chance she has to implement such a program. Perhaps, too, it will help to dispel the widespread illusion that a teacher's life is a happy one.

MISS THEOBALD (that is not her real name) rises at six in the morning and has a light breakfast of orange juice, one egg and coffee. Living in Brooklyn and working in the Bronx, she must leave about 7:00 for she is due at school at 8:30, or, if as-

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signed to yard duty, at 8:20. Transfers are rarely granted to schools nearer the teacher's home. The average traveling time is one hour, morning and afternoon.

The subway, as we all know, is very crowded, and many teachers take the local, fearing that they won't be able to push their way out at an express stop. A teacher will sometimes come in laughing wryly because she has lost her lunch or notebooks in the crush.

Miss Theobald arrives the worse for wear at 8:30. She goes to the General Office, signs the time book, signs all posted notices, looks in her mail box and picks up the key to her room. She opens the door to the children at 8:40 and they stream in. They are all about nine years old; it is a fourth-year class.

The room is not unpleasant. The school is "brand new": that is, about twenty-five years old. The walls are peeling a bit, because they paint only rooms that need repair desperately. Roaches? No, just an occasional mouse. Fun for the kids.

Miss Theobald takes attendance rapidly and writes the names of the absentees on the blackboard. In the afternoon, she will complete this record and transfer it to the official roll book. In this book no erasures are possible. Corrections must be made in red ink. A line for the morning, crossed lines for a full day's attendance, numbers for every half hour late. The roll book serves as a court record. Miss Theobald once promised herself that she would take an afternoon off to read the regulations concerning it, but she's never got around to it.

The kids have hung their clothing in the closet. If it is a rainy day, Miss Theobald helps them with their rubbers; otherwise they will pull their shoes off along with the rubbers. She opens the windows with a long, heavy pole, and supervises the watering of plants, the washing of blackboards and the dusting of books. These activities come under the heading of "pupil participation." The plants are generally a symbol of teacher participation, though—the teacher buys them out of her own pocket.

Health inspection follows. Miss Theobald walks around the room, looking at the children's faces to see whether they look ill, have rashes, scabs or lice. (This school is in what sociologists call a "depressed area.") She demonstrates shoe polishing, though few of the kids have polish at home; and she keeps an eye out for dirty handkerchiefs. Usually, she finds none, dirty or otherwise, and so she presents a sheet of Kleenex from her own box to each child who has no hanky.

The "morning conference" begins. The elected president of the class opens this period by ordering the salute to the flag, which is hung up front in every room. He leads the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner," and the kids take out their spellers to learn the first and last verses. Then Miss Theobald asks them, "What is our plan for today?" and by a series of clever questions gets them to outline the day's work as though they were mapping it out: book inspection, arithmetic, drawing, spelling, gym, log writing. All this is recorded on the blackboard.

No more than three-quarters of an hour is devoted to each subject, so as not to tire the children. They are encouraged to bring in materials related to their studies or to cut pictures out of magazines on related matters. They hold their own discussions on current events. While this goes on, Miss Theobald, one ear for the class, corrects homework. The new program does not call for homework, but the parents call for it; it reminds them of the old days and gives them confidence in the teacher's severity. So the principal orders that the parents be "humored." Not taught, humored.

STILL, this seems like a fairly peaceful morning. It is—until interruptions begin. For Miss Theobald, interruptions are as much a part of the school day as spelling. Every few minutes a little boy or girl comes in with a note from the principal or assistant principal. These notes must be read, signed and complied with on the spot. What do the notes say which the little boy has been taken out of another class to deliver? Number one asks, "How many readers are you missing?" Miss Theobald goes around the class counting. The little boy waits until she finishes and then leaves with her report. Fifteen minutes later he is back with note two, "How many old readers have you?" Around the class again. The little boy waits and leaves with the precious answer. Fifteen minutes later again. Note three, "How many new readers?"

Another notice by messenger. "The boys have been very noisy at exits five and six. You are to impress upon them —" Miss Theobald impresses upon them, and signs the note. A while goes by. A new messenger. "Some child has been writing in the toilet. It is believed that this took place between two and two-thirty yesterday afternoon. Please send me a record of children excused from your class during this period." Miss Theobald looks up the special record of excuses from class. Fortunately, no one had raised his hand in her room between two and two-thirty yesterday. She writes a note to that effect to the assistant principal.

A little boy comes in with a box of chalk. He says, "Take fiteen pieces, thass all, and sign." The "fiteen pieces" are supposed to last an indefinite length of time. Many teachers buy chalk of their own.

Then come the collections for the New York Fund, levied on teachers alone, and for the Red Cross, to which both teachers and children contribute. There is also the bank collection, which involves bank books, canvas bags for the money, bank statements, and explanations to the kids on the complexities of interest. All the clerical work that goes with this is handled by Miss Theobald.

At the beginning of the school year, seeds and bulbs must be ordered, and for this Miss Theobald makes out duplicate order slips for each child. The seeds and bulbs come somewhat late, and they are onions instead of radishes. Tears and a crisis.

Lunches are served to children in school. Those who can afford it pay sixty cents a week. Every Tuesday the children get envelopes in which to place the money for the following week's lunches. Which means that each Tuesday a messenger appears to ask how many envelopes are needed. Miss Theobald supervises the filling out of certain information on these envelopes, and on Wednesday sends the envelopes to the office. She also makes out a card for each child to serve as a pass to the lunchroom. Finally, a special lunch attendance card must be prepared for the office. The lunch cards of absentee children are given to a teacher who is in charge of refunds. In the afternoon an emergency bell rings in Miss Theobald's room. Her heart beats rapidly as she sends a child down to the principal's office to find out what has happened. He comes back with a twelve-cent refund for a little girl who was absent yesterday.

AT TWELVE o'clock, the children are dressed, lined up and marched out of the building—by Miss Theobald.

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If she hasn't brought her own lunch, she runs to the drugstore for a sandwich and a cup of coffee. She is too nervous for more. At 12:50 she is back in class, ready to go on with geography, history, arts and crafts, log writing and interruptions until three o'clock.

There are two alternatives to this intermission. If Miss Theobald has brought her lunch, she will go to the teachers' room on her floor. The window of this room does not open, despite protests to the custodian. The floor is never scrubbed, merely dusted. There are a greyed green table and two chairs, one three-legged. The couch was removed last week: bedbugs. An adjoining toilet contains no toilet paper. Miss Theobald is given a roll a month, and she must carry a few sheets with her during the day. (As a rule, she does not care to leave class for the lavatory; it requires informing another teacher, and then too she would not like to meet the principal in the hall. He is not given to condoning human weakness.)

Every other week Miss Theobald has lunch duty, during her lunch time. This means that from 12:00 to 12:30 she supervises the children's lunch room, keeping order and the attendance record. She must stay until relieved. This generally allows her fifteen minutes for lunch. Other duties of this type, which come periodically, are yard duty from 8:30 to 8:40 and 12:30 to 12:50; and exit, hall and stair duty at twelve and three.

Then there is assembly twice a week, at which Miss Theobald plays hymns and other elevating music on the piano, and listens to the assistant principal deliver lectures on attendance and discipline. As pianist, she does not have to help arrange four hundred children according to size before assembly. She does not have to sit with them in a seat made for a six-year-old, her legs drawn up until she gets cramps. Nor does she have to put on plays for Columbus Day, Christmas, Armistice, Memorial, Father's and Mother's Days, and Easter. That is reserved for her less musical colleagues. But she does not escape the visual-aid sessions after assembly, at which silent films, twenty years old, are shown, entitled *Planting Coffee in Brazil, The Amazon Valley* and *The Taj Mahal.* The figures move so jerkily that she gets a headache watching them. An ancient victrola is played during this performance, but you would have to be within two inches of the speaker to hear anything.

I will not tire you with gym where the kids learn to march, about-face and counter-march; nor with the school library, where the books date back to the Year One and are almost all too difficult for the children, so that Miss Theobald must read to them. There are two important things I have left out.

"I'll consider your application—but there'll be no repairs, no alterations and no painting."

One is that many of the materials indispensable to Miss Theobald's work are not supplied her. For example, she is given one package of drawing paper for the term when six are needed. What can she do but buy them? And so it goes with crayons, scissors, clay, paste, construction paper, mounting paper, stapler and staples, paints, picture books and even curtains, for Miss Theobald is graded on the appearance of her room. She also subscribes to *Life* so the kids will have pictures to cut out and hang on the wall. All this costs her about twenty-five dollars each half year. Added to this, the room is not adapted to the activity program. There are too many fixed seats, and a quarter of these are in need of repair. They give way and the kids fall off them; but the custodian delays work on them. In the first place there is too much red tape involved in ordering material. Second, the custodian is paid in a lump sum to run the school. The amount is supposed to cover both his salary and the wages of the janitors and other help he may need. The less help, the more money for him. This system of indirect hiring makes it possible for a tight custodian, like the one in Miss Theobald's school, to exploit his workers to the detriment of the school. (The Teachers' Union proposes direct civil service hiring of maintenance people to remedy this.)

SECOND, I have not mentioned the size of Miss Theobald's class. In theory, she should have twenty-five pupils for maximum efficiency. *In actuality, she has fifty-two. Friends of hers have had as high as fifty-nine—in other words, nine more than twice as many as they should have theoretically.* Adding insult to injury, the Board of Education insists on the preparation of fake rolls, whose registers show only thirty-nine students at most in a class. It wants the record clear anyway. Miss Theobald keeps two rolls for one class.

But that is not all. There are the uncovered classes. When a teacher falls ill, her class is distributed among the other teachers of her own and other grades, there being less and less substitutes willing to cover such contingencies on a per diem basis. This means that Miss Theobald has six or eight more children during the period of her colleague's absence. In addition, she has been assigned the task of taking attendance for the entire un-

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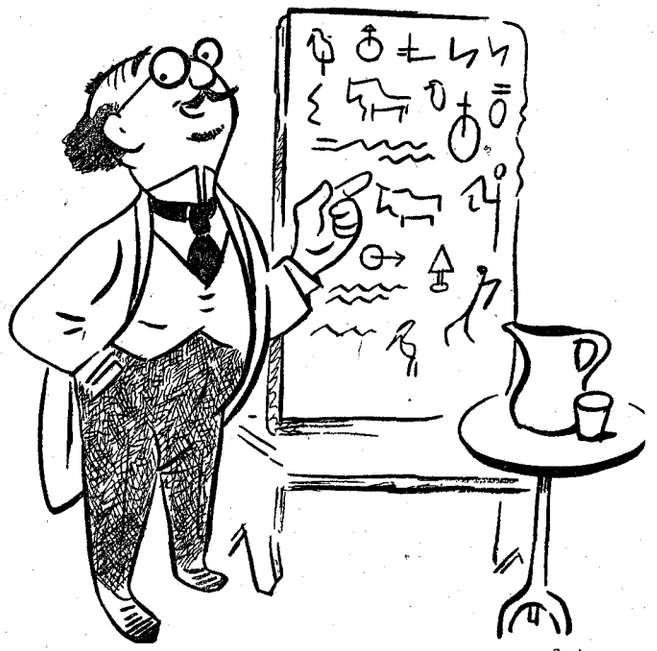

Soriano.

"And now, children, we come to the new Republican legislative program."

covered class. She must walk from room to room each morning and afternoon, performing that clerical work in addition to her own. This may go on for weeks on end. In some cases, children of retarded mental development have been assigned to classes of normal children for a whole term because there was no one to take charge of them.

The uncovered class is, of course, a misfortune for the individual teacher. Viewed as an educational problem, it is something still worse. Some time ago the New York *Sun* reported that on September 25 there were 546 classes without teachers in the city. Of these, 352 represented vacancies caused by the day-to-day absence of teachers for whom no substitutes were available. The remaining 194 represented full-term openings in the elementary and junior high schools for which the school board had no available regular teachers or substitutes. *This means that on any given day in the New York schools, between fifteen and twenty thousand children are without the instruction provided for them in the official school curriculum.*

Miss Theobald's day is officially over at three o'clock. She generally stays after school for an hour correcting papers and making plans for the next day's work. To do this, she must borrow certain texts from her pupils, as there are not enough available to supply her with a full set. She is not married, luckily (!), otherwise she would have to rush home to call for her child in nursery school, to shop and to cook. But before she attained maximum salary she had to take an evening alertness course at a school approved by the Board of Education. Certain courses are given at the local universities and must be paid for.

Such is Miss Theobald's day in school. Burdened with petty detail that should be handled by clerks in the office, harassed by lack of essential equipment, saddled with monstrous-sized classes which her principal insists be kept quiet, though the success of the new program depends on the fullest expression of the child's personality, can she ever carry out the plans she hailed with such joy a few years back? She looks at me, trying to smile, and says, "If you don't have a sense of humor, you'd die; but how can you maintain a sense of humor?"

How to maintain a sense of humor. That is what one teacher's problem is reduced to after ten years in the New York City school system. She, like most of her colleagues, suffers from chronic nervous exhaustion. Being an active union member, she has not succumbed to the demoralization of many unorganized teachers, whose fatigue gives way to resentment and depression, and among whom quarrels over insignificant matters are constantly breaking out. But it is not easy when, in addition to her own dissatisfaction and weariness, she once again sees signs of increasing poverty among her children, more absences, more restlessness, impeded learning capacity. And she wonders: must it all come full circle again? Is there no way to break out of it? There must be.

As MIGHT be expected, the only serious effort being made to avert the disaster which threatens education in New York is that of the organized teachers. The present demands of the Teachers' Union-CIO are:

1. An immediate salary increase of $1,000 annually for all Board of Education employes, with pro-rated increases for substitutes and others on per diem salary.

2. A 100 percent increase in the amount of state aid to education.

3. A statewide minimum salary for teachers of $2,500, with commensurate increases for those on increments above the minimum. The present initial salary schedule is $1,608. And the board wonders why there are so few applicants!

In addition to these demands, the Teachers' Union calls upon the Board of Education to institute practical types of examinations for teacher applicants which really test their ability to teach. In the past, license exams have been designed to eliminate teachers rather than to staff the schools adequately. Last year, for example, the board passed only forty percent of those candidates qualified to take the examination. This despite the fact that the increased birthrate, and the admission to school of children six months younger than heretofore, make desperately imperative the employment of a larger teaching force.

It can be seen that these demands, as well as others which the union makes to relieve the chaotic situation in the schools, have more than a simple economic goal. Not only the morale of the system, but the preservation of its personnel and physical plant, and the very minds of its children, depend upon their being met. The miserable condition of the teachers is driving tens of thousands out of the system and warning tens of thousands of others against replacing them. The quality of our education is at stake. Everyone is aware of these facts, yet the governor, like three monkeys rolled into one, hears nothing, sees nothing, knows nothing. He will not call an extra session of the legislature. He will order a survey, a "special study of school finances to learn the effect of low pay rates." He will then order a commission to study the study. There is time for everything.

Only there is not time. The teachers are angry at being mocked out of their youthful ideals by this cynical disregard of their needs. They do not choose picketlines for love of walking. And they do not rule out the question of strike. They did not take up their profession lightly, and they won't surrender it to Bank and Realty lightly either. The intelligent laborer learns that his hire must be worthy of him.

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THE EXPERTS

When he came back he found Ryan yelling at the top of his voice at Bela who was looking at him with a bewildered and willing expression.

A Short Story by PHILLIP BONOSKY

Illustrated by Jean Bart.

THEY saw the turn-foreman beckoning them and Jurgis and Bela came over.

"This is your new pusher," he said to them when they arrived. They took a look at their new pusher. He was young, about thirty; in the pocket of his khahi shirt he had a notebook and a yellow pencil. He had on high-top laced boots, the kind hunters and surveyors wear.

"His name is Bill Ryan."

They nodded at him but said nothing.

"Well," the foreman said, looking at his watch. "I'm due at the super's office. That stuff got to be out of here by eleven," he said to the pusher. Ryan nodded; it would be out!

The foreman hesitated. "These two guys are experts," he said. "Jurgis has worked in the shipping department thirty-two years. He knows where every grain of dust is. Bela's been here since he come over from the old country. He knows the yard in his sleep."

"Fine," Ryan said. He looked at the two of them nodding his head; looked at their legs, their arms, into their eyes. They looked back with the perpetual greenhorn smile on their faces; the smile that had been glued there from the moment they left ship decades ago and found themselves in a land of strangers.

"Well, I gotta go," the foreman said.

They waited until he was out of sight; even till the car in which he had climbed could no longer be heard.

Then Ryan said, "You hear what boss Crowley say. You *furstay*, no? All cars got to be out by ten o'clock; new train come in. Ten dollar cost company each car overtime. *Furstay?*"

Jurgis said: "Boss say eleven o'clock."

"*I* say ten o'clock," Ryan said, narrowing his eyes.

They shrugged.

"You tell other fella gang no foolin' today! I'm good guy, but no like foolin'! When boss say get cars out, Bill Ryan he get cars out! *Furstay?*"

Again they nodded.

"Okay," Ryan said. "No sleep on job. Old fellas got to move today!"

They went back then, and Ryan returned to the office. The train hadn't come into the yard yet; the workday hadn't started.

Jurgis and Bela joined the gang—five others, including the craneman.

"How's the new pusher?" the craneman, a young enough fellow just out of the Army, asked.

Jurgis made a gesture; it was a sharp slide of the hand, which meant no good. The craneman said: "A so-and-so. Just when it was getting human around here." He pursed his lips and shook his head with disgust.

Jurgis' bones ached and he moved only quickly enough to get where he had to and keep out of the way of things. Bela was younger, but close to pension time, too; except that his eyes were getting dim and he was afraid they'd find it out some day and put him off on a disability. A disability was half pension. It made a difference. It was amazing how many old fellows who would have pulled full pensions in a few more years found themselves on the outside on half pension.

Jurgis sat down on a bench. The whistle hadn't blown yet, so he was still on his own time. He could sit down.

He looked over the enormous yard—like a big iron-roofed barn. It was filled with stacks of steel bars, all kinds and shapes and sizes of bars. All stacked neatly in rows beside each other and on top of each other, separated by boards. Each bunch of bars was tagged or the ends were painted different colors, and they all bore numbers. Some of the steel would go to

"This is your new pusher," the foreman said.

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Detroit for cars—spring steel, for instance; high carbon content steel would go to tool manufacturers, and so on.

Some of the piles were quite high and occasionally your order forced you to go to the bottom of a pile. That means that the craneman took off four or five tons of bars and carried them away till you could get at your bundle; then he replaced them. The system wasn't as efficient as cards in a file-case, but these weren't cards. It took a man who knew his way around to get things out in a hurry. That's why the boss had called Jurgis and Bela experts. They knew their way around. Jurgis would walk about the yard with the paper in his hands and mark out the bundles where he found them; then the crane would come over and the other men would get the bundle up and off to the waiting car.

Jurgis had seen many pushers and foremen come and go in his time. Foremen were always more tolerable than the pushers, for the foreman never bawled a man out directly; he bawled the pusher out. The pusher got a few cents more an hour than a regular worker, and his job was to push. He hoped one day for the superintendent to come by and see him performing miracles, which would elevate him to the job of foreman.

You had to be a certain kind of man to be a pusher.

So Jurgis contemplated the yard. His bones ached and his breakfast had felt like lead that had melted in his stomach and then hardened around his bowels. He was sixty-two years old; he made a laborer's wages. He had learned in all his years in the mill always to grin at a boss—a brown-toothed grin like a half-idiot boy's. This was the lightning rod that protected from disaster. His own thoughts were his own.

The whistle suddenly blew. Automatically, he began to get up. Even if he had wanted to keep on sitting that whistle would have yanked him up; it was in his blood.

He could see Ryan through the mote-filled yard hurrying out of the office. He had several yellow sheets in his hand. The craneman climbed up the long ladder to his parked crane; inside the cab he hid the comic books under the seat.

"Hey, you!" Ryan yelled half way across the yard. The windows high up on the walls were dirty, but still the morning sun shone through in wide beams, casting almost cathedral-like rays down into the dusty yard. The electric lights burned unnoticeably.

Ryan disappeared into the holy atmosphere for a moment and then came through. "What the hell's your name?" he said to Jurgis.

"Jurgis," he replied.

"What kind name dat? Call you Mike, *furstay?* Can't remember all those foreign names."

Jurgis shrugged.

"Now the train's coming in in a

"Get the hell on the job!" he yelled hoarsely.

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minute, and I got the order here." He tapped the yellow pages. "Let's get these lined up before the train gets in. Remember it costs the company ten bucks per hour per car overtime. *Furstay?*"

Jurgis nodded.

"First, we want the spring steel bars," Ryan said. He read off the numbers. He looked at the vast jungle of bars piled on top of each other. "Know where they are?"

"We gon see," Jurgis said.

He took Ryan back to the end of the yard, poked in among some of the load, then indicated a bunch of bars at the bottom of about ten tons of high-piled steel.

"How the hell you going to get it out?" Ryan demanded.

"Get 'im out," Jurgis answered. He called the crane over, then the other workers came over. The crane lowered the cable which was looped at both ends, and these loops the men put around the bars on top of the pile. This bundle was taken across the yard and deposited at a cleared space; then this was repeated until they had reached the bottom one.

By this time the train was in the yard, waiting.

"I hope to hell you don't have to fish for all them bars like that?" Ryan said, looking worried.

Jurgis shrugged and grinned helpfully.

Ryan called out another number and methodically Jurgis went down the line and poked his finger at the bars lying neatly arranged in the middle of a large pile. The crane carted the upper bars across the yard, then the desired ones over to the cars, where two laborers unlooped the cable.

Ryan was looking at his watch; from it to the yellow pages in his hand. From them to the cars on the tracks. He came up to Jurgis: "I thought Crowley said you guys were experts." Jurgis grinned at him.

"No *furstay*," he said amiably.

"Crowley say you fellas know where all kind bar," Ryan said as if he were talking to a deaf man. "Too slow. Go get 'em out, *furstay?*"

Jurgis grinned and nodded his head faithfully.

The next order was discovered, after some hunting, among bars that had been sent across the yard and lost; these bars had previously been hiding the first order. Jurgis hadn't been able to find any place to put them temporarily, and had forgotten where they were.

"Look here!" Ryan swore. "Them bars were right here before!"

"Boss," Bela said. "You smart mans, but you make leetle mistake. First you get all same kind bar, tell Jurgis; he gon get all together. Jurgis no know if you want more like dese."

"When I want you to tell me how to run my job, I'll ask you!" Ryan said to Bela.

Bela shrugged; he covered himself with a nodding grin.

Ryan planted himself at Jurgis' back and said: "Get them damn bars out of here, and do it in a hurry! You understand, you damned ignorant blockhead? You spend your life in this yard and you don't know your head from a hole in a ground."

"We get 'im, Mr. Pusher," Jurgis said loyally.

But it was hard to find the next order; and when it was found it took almost half an hour to uncover it. The following order happened to be in the same pile, but that pile was now dispersed. It was only by dint of much searching that Jurgis located it.

Then the crane broke down. The craneman couldn't find the trouble for awhile.

Time was moving. The brakeman came over and said to Ryan: "You're pretty slow here. We got to move—"

"Get the hell out of here!" Ryan snapped at him. He went to Jurgis and shoved him aside. "Go and take a crap, you greenhorn! Get out of here!"

JURGIS looked hurt, but left the yard, following instructions. When he came back, he found Ryan yelling at the top of his voice at Bela who was looking at him with a bewildered and willing expression. He sat on the bench and brought his coffee out from his lunch-box. It was much warmer now than it would be at lunch-time. Occasionally he glanced up to see Ryan running up and down the yard, a wild look in his eyes, his jaws working furiously. Eleven o'clock arrived and one of the men from the cars came over and told Ryan that he was afraid there'd been a mistake. He didn't think those were the right bars they were loading; he knew the kind of bars Detroit took.

Ryan dashed over and began to compare the figures; suddenly the crane came crashing back to the cars and began to unload. This was managed in an hour and a half. Ryan caught sight of Jurgis thoughtfully sipping his coffee and tore over to him. "Get the hell on the job!" he yelled hoarsely. "You mixed up the whole damned shipment! We've lost time! It's costing money every minute! Costing *money!*" he roared. "On the job, get off your tail!"

Jurgis rose and followed him. Ryan was breathing hard and there was a fantastic, panicked glare in his eyes. He felt surrounded by enemies, invisible, impalpable enemies; enemies he couldn't take hold of, roar down. He kept looking at his wristwatch, then at the cars, then at the order-sheets. He ran back and forth giving numbers to both Bela and Jurgis, sending Bela to locate orders in advance while Jurgis arranged to have the crane carry them off.

At twelve o'clock they were beginning the entire shipment again.

The telephone in the office began to jangle, and Ryan would freeze wherever he was; the boy came running out of the office, urgency written on his face. . . .

It was one o'clock when Crowley suddenly re-entered the yard. His eyes swept from the cars to the working men; he approached Ryan: "This the last car?"

Ryan paled and almost staggered: "No—no," he said hoarsely. "Got in trouble. Mix-up."

"You know the demurrage is adding up," Crowley said.

"I know, I know," Ryan said nodding his head passionately.

"What happened?"

In the middle of his explanation, Crowley cut him short and said: "Ryan, you know, I don't think you're cut out for shipping work. I think you'd better go to the office and wait for me." Ryan tried to speak but couldn't say it, and went off looking haggard. When he was gone, Crowley called Jurgis over and said to him and the others:

"Okay, get those bars out!" He looked at his watch. "By three o'clock." As he turned to go, he added acidly: "And don't hurry too much."

At three o'clock the cars were loaded and pulling out of the mill.

It seemed that Jurgis was a lot luckier in the afternoon. All the bars on the order-list were right on top where it was convenient to get them. In fact they handled the bars like experts.

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JIM CROW: MARYLAND METHOD

As against the dominant white supremacy pattern, labor and the Negro people are advancing the fight for equal rights in the old "Free State."

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

This is the second of two articles on Baltimore which describe the problems of the Negro people in a typical border state. The first appeared in our November 5 issue.

Baltimore, Md.

THE "legal lynching" that continues year in and out as part of the "normal pattern" of border states ranges in Maryland from intermittent terrorism of the Negro people by police to refinements such as refusal of some of the largest department stores to sell merchandise to Negroes.

At the May Company, one of a nationwide chain whose employes in Denver are engaged in a bitter strike (AFL Retail Clerks), I watched from a few feet distant while Mrs. Beatrice Martin of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People approached a salesgirl with an article she wanted to purchase. Later Mrs. Martin and I met outside the store and she told me what had happened. "The salesgirl told me she couldn't sell it to me. I pretended not to understand. She asked if I were an employe. I said I was not but I'd looked everywhere for just this purchase I wanted to make and hadn't found it elsewhere. 'I'd like to sell it to you the worst way,' she said, 'but it's against the policy of our store to sell to colored people unless they're employes. It would mean my job. But I'll tell you what to do—get one of the elevator girls to take a minute off and bring it to me and I'll sell it to her.' And that's what I did. She brought the purchase to me, which was sold to her at a discount, and I gave her something extra. Of course it would mean their jobs if it were known. But you can see what the employes think of the policy." The employes in this store are not organized; the AFL lost an election in September. At Hutzler's and at Stewart's, the policy is not to sell to Negroes, and most of the stores refuse to let Negroes try on shoes and other merchandise. To open a charge account at the Hub now, she said, requires approval of other stores—stores which have never allowed Negroes to have charge accounts.

Negro seamen getting off ships in Baltimore can find no restaurant on the waterfront where they can sit down and get a meal. The National Maritime Union during its strike found restauranteurs who would give the strikers free meals—if they were white. Quota systems are applied by hotels serving dinners to organizations. The Royal Theater, owned by whites, has its own Jim Crow—it will not allow whites to attend.

Not that there are not some important victories in the fight against segregation. It was during the NMU strike that Jim Crow was broken at the United Seamen's Service for the first time, and Negro and white slept under the same roof, a practice the port area executive is continuing despite strong pressure. On Labor Day, 1945, Jim Crow was broken for the first time at Carlins Park, when the CIO held a huge rally. But when Labor Day was over the old Jim Crow restrictions were clamped on again.

The nationwide fight against lynching in the South is having its effect in Maryland. A large Stop Lynching Rally was held at the Coliseum recently, with New York City Councilman Ben Davis, the principal speaker, calling for repeal of Maryland's Jim Crow law and passage of state FEPC and civil rights laws. Broad support from twenty-three organizations, including unions and veterans' organizations, civic associations, the Maryland PAC, NAACP, Lawyers' Guild, National Negro Congress, Communist Party of Maryland, tenants' councils and others, has been enrolled by the Maryland Congress Against Discrimination, which met October 26 and 27 in the Enon Baptist Church.

Virgil Pinckney, executive secretary of the NAACP, is hopeful that when the state legislature meets the long battle to repeal the Jim Crow law will be successful. In this, he said, he feels the Congress Against Discrimination will be a definite impetus.

"The same elements which resort to open acts of violence, to the rope and to tar and feathers, in the deep South," Mr. Pinckney told me, "recognize here in Maryland and other border states that variegated opinion exists. They dare not operate in the open but they seek support in discriminatory actions which have the same basis, a pattern of white supremacy."

ACTUALLY there is no law which provides for segregation throughout the state of Maryland. There are other discriminatory laws, but only one Jim Crow law on the statute books. This requires all steamboat, railroad and bus companies to erect "good and substantial partitions" between white and colored passengers in intrastate travel. (The Supreme Court outlawed segregation in interstate bus and rail travel.) This law, while it furnishes a thin legal pretext for all the Jim Crow that operates in hotels, restaurants and theaters — where Negroes can sit in the third gallery, not the second—and so on, is cheerfully violated on railroads, however. Only on one or two lines on the eastern shore is such segregation carried out.

Another law says there must be a white supervisor of colored schools, but there is none which says there must be separate schools. One of the most amazing of the "quaint" laws of the Free State of Maryland (a title which evokes much wrath in its Negro citizens) is one which holds that a white woman who is "got with child" by a Negro is subject to imprisonment of from eighteen months to five years. "Of course nothing is said about a white man who is father to a Negro child," said Attorney W. A. C. Hughes Jr., counsel for the NAACP in some of its famous cases, as he showed me the law.

Each year the reactionary legislators from Maryland's outlying coun-

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ties bitterly oppose repeal of the Jim Crow law. Last year hundreds of delegates attended the hearing on repeal, and it was passed for the first time in the Senate but defeated by voice vote in the House. "On one occasion," said Attorney Hughes, "they even stole the bill. When the time came for it to be read, it just couldn't be found."

Because in Maryland there is a certain background of liberal tradition, running counter to the ingrained white supremacy attitudes of the ruling classes, the NAACP has chosen Maryland as a testing ground in many of its legal battles.

To understand this healthy democratic strain running through Maryland's life, so difficult for the casual visitor to realize, it is necessary to recall some history of the labor movement. In 1833 journeymen hatters in Baltimore went out on strike against a wage cut, other unions joined them and the United Trade Society was born, with seventeen unions affiliated. It in turn organized an Association of Farmers, Mechanics and Other Workingmen. In 1877, a year of crisis and panic, the railroad workers went on strike against another steep cut in wages, and were supported en masse by other workers. Federal, state and local police were called out to battle strikers and thirteen persons were killed. Out of this a powerful Workingmen's Party emerged and entered its own candidates in the elections, winning a sweeping victory and even electing a mayor. The Workingmen's Party worked closely with the Negro people, and obtained one-third of the popular vote. But corrupt politicians voided the will of the people, ballot boxes were stuffed and ballots stolen and the candidates who had won were not allowed to take office.

In 1935 Charles Houston and Thurgood Marshall, attorneys for the NAACP, took the case of Donald Murray into the courts. He was a Baltimore boy who had graduated from Amherst College. He applied for admission to the Law School of the University of Maryland and was refused. The decision of Circuit Court Judge Eugene O'Dunne, now retired, was that under the Fourteenth Amendment unless the state provided equal facilities, Negroes must be admitted to institutions provided for whites. The state promptly bought Morgan College, owned by the Methodist Church, to get around the law, and made it a Jim Crow college. But seven students have graduated since from the heretofore lily-white law school and are now practicing. The state's practice of providing scholarships out of state funds for professional schools such as medicine and dental schools continues, however. "I don't know of anyone who has applied to those schools," said Hughes. "Howard University in Washington is too good a school. By making it so good the government has taken a lot of pressure off the states."

EQUALIZATION of teachers' salaries in various counties in Maryland was won in court by the NAACP, which also won federal decisions since used throughout the country in suits filed in Louisiana, Florida, Texas and Virginia. Most recent decision in this field was in the case of Louise Kerr versus the trustees of the Enoch Pratt library, a private corporation supported by Baltimore funds. This library, with twenty-seven branches, gives its own training course for its employes, but to colored applicants the doors are barred. When the Supreme Court upheld a Court of Appeals decision and the library could no longer discriminate, it promptly stopped its training course, said Hughes. It has now started it again, however, and Negroes will apply.

The pattern of stubborn intransigence on the part of the entrenched white supremacy is the same in other border states. The University of Missouri's Gaines case, where the Negro Gaines mysteriously disappeared and has not been heard from since the Supreme Court issued a decision favor-

"Fringed Scarf," lithograph by Marion Greenwood. AAA Gallery.

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B. Hand.

able to him, is an example. To get around the law it set up a "law school" at Lincoln where, said Hughes, at one time three professors were teaching a couple of students.

A few years ago Hughes defended a stevedore, Willoughby Wilson, who in the indictment was charged with being "a Negro man" who committed what the statute calls the "infamous crime" of marrying a white woman, Mabel Showacre. The wife's family had prevailed on her to testify against him, and she testified she was white. She obviously was, and Wilson obviously was black, but the lawyer argued that the law of evidence says once the race of the prosecuting party is established the presumption is that the defendant is of the same race. So, he argued, Wilson could be presumed to be white. The judge held that he could take judicial notice of his color. But what, asked the attorney—who could from appearance be white, indicating the defendant who certainly was not—was the well-considered opinion of a Louisiana court? It was that while all Negroes were colored not all colored men are Negroes.

He even cited Webster's definition that a Negro is someone from the Sudan, an area "between the Congo and the Sahara," and asked if the state of Maryland had proved that. The burden was on the state to prove he was a Negro, he claimed. Finally the judge found the stevedore guilty and sentenced him to ten years, but suspended sentence, and gave the same verdict on a perjury charge. "We had a chance, we felt, of going to the Supreme Court and breaking down the whole fabric of miscegenation laws," said Hughes, "but the defendant wouldn't agree."

And there was Hughes' own case, which broke into the press, when he and his law partner, mistaken by policemen for white men, were told to get out of a Negro neighborhood. When his partner asked one of the policemen for his number and name, the policemen hauled them to the station indignantly in a patrol wagon. Recognized by Negroes on the way, they found men already waiting at the police station to make bond for them, and the case was dismissed the next morning.

WHILE Baltimore still refuses to employ Negroes as firemen, and of its 1,388 policemen only twelve are Negroes, and while the telephone company all during the war refused to put on Negro phone operators or the transit system Negro motormen or conductors, the industrial picture is brighter, in many respects, than any other.

Before 1935 the Chamber of Commerce used to send out a prospectus urging industry to come to Baltimore for cheap labor, and there was little organization outside the garment industry and railroading. Since then both the AFL and the CIO have made tremendous strides forward, and a progressive seamen's movement in this important port has lent maturity to the labor movement. During the war some 45,000 shipyard workers and 40,000 aircraft workers were organized.

Since V-J Day, according to Cecil Scott, head of the industrial section of the Baltimore Urban League, the proportion of Negroes employed is about the same as before V-J Day. This he attributes to unionization. "The CIO has done a splendid job," he said. "Since V-J Day 500 Negroes have gone into the Middle River plant of Glen Martin's, due to the fact that they are in the union. They are segregated in one department, it is true, but segregation does not operate in cafeterias or, to my knowledge, in washroom facilities."

On Jan. 31, 1946, he said, in 123 manufacturing industries, employment had dropped to 110,000, of whom 17,000 were Negroes. Prior to V-J Day, there was a total of 225,000, of whom 34,000 were Negroes. This was due merely to the operation of the seniority rule, and the fact that during the war there was a rapid turnover of whites, while, simply because they did not dare move once they had a job, Negroes kept theirs. Many in shipyards have been absorbed in steel mills without loss of seniority, for which he gives the CIO shipyard workers' union full credit.

Negro women have been sorely hit, however, by unemployment. "A series of articles in the Baltimore *Sun* papers did not help," he said. "They made USES authorities more rigid than they might have been, so that women were forced to take underpaid domestic workers' jobs or lose unemployment relief." And there is a dangerous tendency among many firms, he declared, to get rid of Negro employes by hiring only white replacements when Negroes drop out.

Another negative factor is the discriminatory practices of sections of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Scott showed me the results of a survey of nineteen different AFL construction unions on their attitude toward accepting Negro veterans as apprentices. This is one industry which could absorb many Negro workers. Only the iron workers answered with an unconditional "Yes"—that they would accept them. The roofers said yes, but there was a $100 joining fee. The answer of the engineers was, "No, white engineers will not train them." And Negroes who worked during the war fitting ship partitions could now classify as skilled carpenters—except that the AFL longshoremen's union to which they belonged classified them as laborers.

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HOW I BECAME A WRITER

"The one sacred thing is the dissatisfaction of man with himself and his striving to be better than he is." Words for our writers.

By MAXIM GORKY

The first installment of the essay of which this is the concluding part was published last week (NM, November 12). It is printed by permission of Pursuit Press and Boni & Gaer, who will issue it shortly as part of a book which will also contain Gorky's first novel, "Orphan Paul."

Now I will answer the question: how I learned to write. My impressions came both directly from life and out of books. The first sort of impression one might compare with raw materials and the second with semi-manufactured goods; or putting it more crudely to make it plainer, in the first case I saw in front of me an ox and the second its beautifully tanned hide. I owe a great deal to foreign literature, especially to French literature.

My grandfather was harsh and a miser, but I had never seen and understood him as well as I saw and understood him after having read Balzac's novel *Eugenie Grandet*. Old Grandet, Eugenie's father, is also a miser and in general very like my grandfather except that he is less intelligent and less interesting. Compared with the Frenchman, my old Russian granddad, whom I did not like, definitely gained in stature. This did not induce me to change my attitude toward him but it was a great discovery for me that a book was capable of disclosing to me something I had never seen or noticed before about somebody I knew.

George Eliot's tedious *Middlemarch* and Auerbach's and Spielhagen's books taught me that although in the English and German provinces people lived slightly different lives from those of the people in Nizhni Novgorod, they did not live so very much better. They talked about the same things, about their own English and German kopeks; they too said that one should fear God and love Him but they too, like the people of my street, did not love each other in the least and especially did not love peculiar people who in one way or another were different from the majority. Although I was not looking for similarities between Russians and foreigners, but on the contrary was looking for differences, similarities were what I actually found.

My grandfather's friends, the ruined merchants Ivah Shchurov and Yakov Kotelnikov, talked about the same things in the same way as the characters in Thackeray's celebrated *Vanity Fair*. I had learned to read from the Book of Psalms and loved the book very much because of its fine musical language. When Yakov Kotelnikov, my grandfather, and in general all the old men complained to each other about their children, I remembered how King David complained to God of his son, the rebellious Absalom. It seemed to me that the old men were not speaking the truth when they told each other that people in general, and the young people in particular, were living worse lives and were getting lazier, more stupid and unmanageable and less God-fearing than they had been in the past. For the hypocritical characters in Dickens said just the same.

There was, of course, no system, or consistency in my reading; it was all a matter of chance. Victor Sergeyev, my master's brother, liked to read popular French novels by Xavier de Montepin, Gaboriau and Bouvier, and having read these authors he chanced on Russian books which ridiculed and gave hostile descriptions of the revolutionaries whom they called "Nihilists."

Mariano Paredes.

I also read these books and found it interesting to read about people who bore almost no resemblance to the sort of people among whom I was living, but seemed more closely related to the convict who had invited me to come for a walk with him. I did not, of course, understand what these "revolutionaries" were wanting, which, of course, was the intention of the authors, who painted them in the blackest colors.

By accident I somehow got hold of Pomyalovsky's stories *Molotov* and *Little Man's Luck* and after Pomyalovsky had shown me the "poverty and wearisomeness" of petty-bourgeois life, the beggarly happiness of the petty-bourgeois, I began to feel, as yet instinctively, that the grim Nihilists were somehow better respected than the respectable Molotov.

Foreign literature provided me with plenty of material for comparisons and aroused my admiration by the remarkable mastery with which it depicted people in such life-like and plastic fashion that I felt as if I could touch them. Besides, I always found them more active than the Russians—they talked less and did more. A genuine and profound educational influence was exercised on me as a writer by that great trio of French literature, Stendhal, Balzac and Flaubert, and I would most strongly advise beginners to read these authors; they are truly artists of genius and the greatest masters of form: Russian literature has not yet produced writers of such excellence. I read them in Russian but that did not prevent me from feeling the artistry with which these Frenchmen handled the language. After the mass of inferior stuff I had read, after Mayne-Reid, Cooper, Gustave Aimard, Ponson du Terrail, the stories of these great writers seemed to me almost miraculous.

I remember reading Flaubert's *A Simple Heart* one Whitsun evening on the roof of the shed where I had climbed up to hide from the holiday-

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making crowd. I was absolutely overcome by the story, I was blind and deaf; the noisy and merry holiday was veiled for me by the figure of that simple woman, the servant who had accomplished no heroic exploits and committed no crimes. It was difficult to understand why the plain, familiar words put together by a man into a story about the uninteresting life of a servant moved me so. There was some incomprehensible trick concealed here and—I am not inventing this—almost involuntarily, like a puzzled savage, I held the pages up to the light as if to find the solution of the trick somewhere between the lines.

I had read dozens of books in which mysterious and bloody crimes were described. Then I read Stendhal's Italian stories and again I could not understand how he had done it. Here was a man describing cruel people, revengeful killers—and yet I was reading his stories as though I was reading the life of the saints or hearing the *Dream of the Madonna*, the story of her wanderings through hell amongst the torments of the damned.

But what overwhelmed me completely was when I read in Balzac's *La Peau de Chagrin* the description of the orgy in the banker's house where about twenty people are talking all at once, creating a chaotic noise, the polyphony of which I seemed to hear. But the most important thing was that I did not merely hear, I also saw how each of them spoke, I saw their eyes, their smiles, their gestures, although Balzac had not described either the faces or the figures of the banker's guests.

In general his portrayal of people by means of words, his art of making their speech audible and giving it life, his absolute mastery of dialogue always inspired me with great admiration of Balzac and the French. Balzac's books are written in oil-colors, so to speak, and when I first saw pictures by Rubens they immediately reminded me of Balzac. When I read Dostoyevsky's passionate novels I cannot but think that he owed a very great deal to this supreme master of the novel. I also liked the books of the two Goncourts, dry and precise like a pen-and-ink drawing, and Zola's grim and dark painting of life. Victor Hugo's novels made little impression on me; even *Quatre-vingt-treize* I read with indifference; the reason for this indifference I understood only after I had read Anatole France's novel *Les Dieux Ont Soif*. Stendhals's novels I read only after I had learned to hate many things and his calm tone and skeptical sarcasm greatly strengthened me in my hatred.

From all I have said about books it follows that it was from the French that I learned to write. Although this happened by chance I think that it was not a bad thing and I advise young writers to learn French in order to read the great masters in the original and learn from them the great art of the word.

It was considerably later that I came to read the classics of Russian literature: Gogol, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Goncharov, Dostoyevsky and Leskov. Leskov influenced me, no doubt, by his amazing knowledge and richness of language; altogether this is an excellent writer who has a subtle and profound knowledge of all things Russian, a man who is still not appreciated at his proper value in our literature. Chekhov said that he owed him a great deal and I think Remisov could have said the same.

I point out these connections and influences in order to emphasize once more that knowledge of the history of Russian and foreign literature is an absolute necessity for a writer.

WHEN I was about twenty years old I began to understand that I had seen, heard and experienced many things about which I ought to and indeed must tell other people. It seemed to me that I understood and felt certain things in a different way from other people. This worried me and made me restless and loquacious. Even when reading such a master as Turgenev, I sometimes thought that perhaps I might tell the stories of the heroes in *A Sportsman's Sketches* in a different way from Turgenev. At this time I was already regarded as an interesting story-teller and dockers, bakers, tramps, carpenters, railway-workers, "pilgrims to holy places" and in general people among whom I was living would listen to me with attention. When I told them about books I had read I caught myself more and more often telling the stories differently, distorting what I had read, adding something to it out of my own experience. This happened because for me literature and life had merged into one; a book was the same sort of manifestation of life as a man, a book was also a living, speaking reality, and it was less a "thing" than were all other things created or to be created by man.

Intellectuals who listened to me told me:

"Write! Try to write!"

Often I felt as if drunk and was subject to fits of loquacity, a sort of wordy debauch resulting from my desire to speak of everything that grieved or gladdened me; I wanted to relieve myself by speaking of it. I had moments of tormenting tension when I had a lump in my throat like a hysterical woman. I wanted to shout aloud that Anatoli the glazier, my friend and a very gifted lad, would perish if no one helped him; that Theresa the street-walker was a good woman and that it was an injustice that she was a prostitute and that the students who used

Madame Hearst: "Girls, I w

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her did not understand this just as they did not understand that Matitsa, the old beggar woman, was more intelligent than Yakovleva, our bookish young midwife.

Without telling even my close friend, the student Guri Pletnyov, I wrote some verses about Theresa and Anatoli, about the snow which melted in spring but did not do so in order to drip down in a stream of dirty water from the street into the cellar where the bakers were working; I wrote that the Volga was a beautiful river, that the pretzelmaker Kuzin was Judas Iscariot, and that life was a swinish and painful business that killed the soul.

Writing verse came easy to me but I saw that my verses were vile and I despised myself for my lack of skill and talent. I read Pushkin, Lermontov, Nekrasov, Kurochkin's translations of Beranger, and saw perfectly well that I was not in the least like any of these poets. I was afraid to write prose because it seemed to me that prose was much more difficult than verse; prose demanded especially sharp eyes, the ability to see and observe things invisible to others, and a certain exceptionally compact and powerful arrangement of words. But for all that I did try to write prose as well, preferring, however, to write rhythmical prose, because I found the writing of ordinary prose beyond my powers. The results of these attempts of mine were simply pitiful and ridiculous. I wrote an enormously long poem in rhythmical prose which I called "Song of the Old Oak." In ten words V. G. Korolenko demolished this "wooden" production root and branch. In it I had, if I remember right, put forward my ideas in connection with an article entitled "The Whirlpool of Life" (published if I am not mistaken in the scientific journal *Knowledge*) and discussing the theory of evolution. I can remember only a single sentence of the whole thing:

"I have come into the world in order not to agree"—and it seems that I really did not agree with the theory of evolution.

to meet Miss Hooey Ludenz, who has just volunteered her services."

I THINK it was Nadson who said that that "Our beggarly tongue is cold and contemptible" and few of our poets have not complained of the poverty of our language.

I think that these complaints of poverty relate not only to the Russian language but to human language as a whole. They are evoked by the fact that there are thoughts and feelings too elusive to be expressed in words. But if we set aside the things which are too elusive for words, the Russian language is inexhaustibly rich and is growing richer with amazing rapidity.

It may be useful to mention here that the language is created by the people. The division of a language into literary and colloquial language means that we have what one might call a "raw" language on the one hand and a language molded by master hands on the other. The first who understood this was Pushkin and he was also the first to show how to use the speech material of the people and how to mold it.

The writer is the emotional mouthpiece of his country and of his class, he is their ear, their eye and their heart; he is the voice of his time. He should know as much as possible, and the better acquainted he is with the past the better will he understand his own time, the more strongly and profoundly will he perceive the universally revolutionary character of our time and the scope of its tasks. It is necessary and even obligatory to know the history of the people; it is no less necessary to know what it thinks about social and political issues. Scholars who study ethnography and the history of culture tell us that the people's way of thinking finds expression in tales, legends, proverbs and sayings. And it is perfectly true that proverbs and sayings give a most complete and fascinating expression of how the mass of the people think.

In general, proverbs and sayings formulate with exemplary brevity the

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whole social and historical life-experience of the toiling people and it is imperative for a writer to study this material, which will teach him to clench some words just as fingers are clenched in a fist and to unfold other words which have been tersely compressed by others—unfold them so as to reveal the dead things, hostile to the tasks of the hour, which have been concealed in them.

I have learned a great deal from proverbs or, in other words, from thinking in aphorisms.

It was this kind of live thoughts which taught me to think and to write. Such thoughts, the thoughts of house-porters, clerks, down-and-outs, and all sorts of other people, I found in books where they were clothed in other words. Thus the facts of life and literature mutually supplemented each other.

I have already spoken of the way in which masters of the word create types and characters, but perhaps it may be useful to mention two interesting instances:

Goethe's *Faust* is one of the finest products of artistic creation, entirely a product of the imagination, a figment of the brain, the incarnation of thoughts in images. I read *Faust* when I was twenty years old and somewhat later I learned that two hundred years before the German Goethe, Christopher Marlowe, an Englishman, had also written about *Faust;* that *Pan Tvardovsky,* a Polish novel, was also a sort of *Faust,* and so was the Frenchman Paul de Musset's *Seeker After Happiness.* I also found out that the source of all books about Faust was a medieval folk-tale about a man who sold his soul to the devil because he wanted personal happiness and power over men and over the forces of nature. This tale in its turn was born out of the observation of life and work of the medieval alchemists who strove to make gold and produce an elixir of immortality. Among these people there were many honest dreamers, "fanatics of an idea," but there were also swindlers and charlatans. It was the failure of all the efforts of these people to achieve a higher power that was held up to ridicule in all the stories about the adventures of the medieval Doctor Faust, whom even the devil himself could not help to achieve omniscience and immortality.

Side by side with the unhappy figure of Faust stands another character also known to every nation. In Italy he is Pulcinello, in England Punch, in Turkey Karapet, in our country Petrushka. He is the invincible hero of the puppet-show, he defeats everything and everybody—the police, the priests, even death and the devil—while he himself remains immortal. In this crude and naive image the working people incarnated their own selves and their firm belief that in the long run it will be they who will defeat and overcome everything and everybody.

These two instances once more confirm what was said above: traditional "anonymous" works of literature—that is to say, the products of unknown people—are also subject to the law that the characteristic traits of some social group must be rendered tangible by the concentration of all these traits in a single individual member of the group. Strict observation of these laws by the writer helps him to create types. Thus did Charles de Coster create his Till Eulenspiegel, the national type of the Fleming; Romain Rolland his Burgundian Colas Breugnon; Alphonse Daudet his Provencal Tartarin of Tarascon. A writer can only create such brilliant portraits of typical people if he has well-developed powers of observation, the ability to find similarities and spot differences, and if he is prepared to learn, to learn and to learn. Where there is no precise knowledge, guessing takes its place and of ten guesses, nine are wrong.

I do not consider myself a master capable of creating characters and types equalling in artistic merit such types and characters as Oblomov, Rudin, Bazarov, etc. But even in order to write *Foma Gordeyev* I had to observe many a dozen merchants' sons who were dissatisfied with their fathers' lives and professions. They all had a vague feeling that there was little point in their monotonous, "poor and wearisome" life. The prototypes of my Foma, doomed to a dull life, resenting it, and given to brooding, either took to drink and became debauchees, men who "burned up life," or else they became such "white ravens" as Sava Morozov.* Foma Gordeyev's godfather, Mayakin, was also put together out of a lot of little traits, out of "proverbs," so to speak; but I had not been mistaken: after 1905, when the workers and peasants had paved a road to power for Mayakin with their own bodies, the Mayakins we all know played a not insignificant part in the struggle against the working class and even now have not yet ceased to dream of returning to their old haunts.

* Morozov was a Russian capitalist who supported the revolutionary movement with financial contributions.

YOUNG people have asked me why I wrote about tramps.

Living among the lower middle-class and seeing around me people whose only object was to exploit other people by hook or crook, to turn other people's blood and sweat into kopeks and turn the kopeks into rubles, I, like my fifteen-year-old correspondent, came to hate fiercely the parasitic life of these commonplace people who resembled each other like copper coins from the same mint.

Tramps for me were "uncommon" people. They were uncommon because they were "declassed," men who had cut loose from their class or had been repudiated by it and had lost the most characteristic traits of their class. In Nizhni Novogorod, in the "Millionka," among the "Golden Company," former well-to-do tradesmen, my own cousin Alexander Kashirin who was a gentle dreamer, the Italian artist Tontini Gladkov, who had been a secondary schoolmaster, a certain Baron B., a former assistant police inspector who had done a long stretch for robbery, and the famous thief, "General Nikolla," whose real name was Vander-Vliet, all got on famously together.

In Kazan, in the "glass factory," I came across another lot of about twenty people of no less divergent origin. There was a "student" whose name was Radlov, or it may have been Radunov; an old ragpicker who had done ten years' penal servitude; Vassska Grachik, a former footman of Governor Andreyevsky; Rodzievich, a Byelorussian engine-driver, son of a priest; Davidov, a veterinary surgeon. Most of these people were diseased and drunkards; fights between them were frequent but ties of comradely mutual assistance were well developed among them and everything that they managed to earn or to steal they ate and drank in common. I saw that although their living conditions were worse than those of ordinary people, they considered themselves better and indeed they felt better than ordinary people because they were not greedy, they did not try to get the better of each other, they did not hoard money—

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Will Barnet.

There were strange people among these tramps and there were a lot of things about them I did not understand, but I was greatly biased in their favor by the fact that they did not complain of life and spoke of the comfortable life of the respectable people sarcastically or ironically, yet not out of a feeling of concealed envy, not because the grapes were sour, but rather out of a feeling of pride, out of the knowledge that although they were "living badly," they were still better men than those who were "living well."

Kuvalda, the dosshouse-keeper, whom I described in *The Outcasts*, I saw for the first time when he appeared before Kolontayev, a justice of the peace. I was astounded by the dignified bearing with which this man in rags answered the questions of the justice of the peace, the contempt with which he replied to the policeman, the prosecutor and the innkeeper whom he had beaten up. No less impressed was I by the mild irony of a tramp in Odessa who told me the story which I used for my own story, *Chelkash*. I met this man in a hospital where we were both lying ill. I well remember his smile which bared a row of magnificent white teeth, the smile with which he replied to the policeman, the dirty trick played on him by a lad whom he had hired to do some work for him. "So I let him go and keep the money: 'Go, you fool, and fill your belly!'"

He reminded me of Dumas' "noble" heroes. We left the hospital together and as we were sitting together in a camp outside the town, he treated me to some melons and suggested: "Perhaps you'd like to come and do a good job with me? I think you'd manage all right."

I was extremely flattered by this suggestion but by that time I already knew that there were better things I could do than smuggling and thieving.

So I would say that my predilection for tramps resulted from my desire to portray "uncommon" people rather than the mean petty-bourgeois types. Of course, this was partly due to the influence of foreign, and especially French, literature, much brighter and more colorful than our Russian. But what moved me above all was the desire to embellish with my own imagination the "beggarly, wearisome life" about which my fifteen-year-old girl correspondent wrote.

This desire, as I have already said, is called "romanticism."

For me, there are no ideas beyond man; for me, man and only man is the creator of all things and all ideas, he is the miracle-worker and the future master of all the forces of nature. The most beautiful things in this our world are the things made by labor, made by skilled human hands, and all our thoughts, all our ideas, are born out of the arts, science and technology. Thoughts come after the facts. I bow to man because beyond the incarnations of man's reason and imagination, I feel and see nothing in our world.

And if it is thought necessary to speak of sacred things, then the one sacred thing is the dissatisfaction of man with himself and his striving to be better than he is; sacred is his hatred of all the trivial rubbish which he himself has created; sacred is his desire to do away with greed, envy, crime, disease, war, and all enmity between men on earth; and sacred is his labor.

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YESTERDAY'S STORY TODAY

Rogge is right in warning that the fascists are not out of business—the plotters exposed by John L. Spivak years ago in NM are still at work.

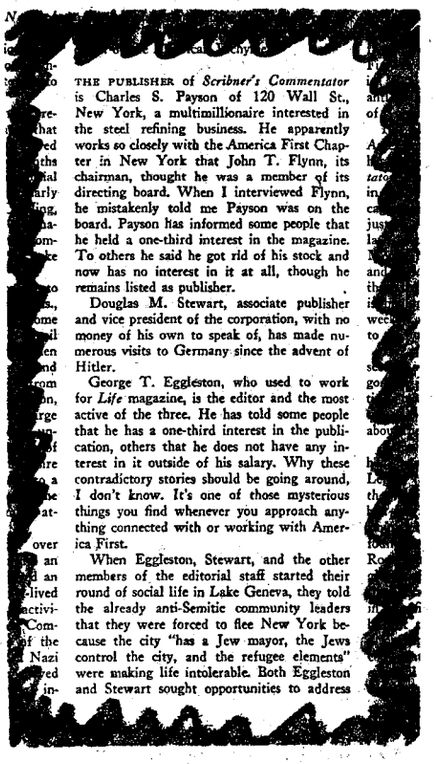
By MILTON BLAU

THERE was something very distinctive about Fall on the East Side of New York in the Nineteen-thirties. It was during this season that all the kids my age would turn to being lumbermen. We would set out in groups to hunt down wood for the stoves of our cold flats on Ninth Street near the East River. This was never an easy job. The empty fruit crates we managed to get, one way or another, from the peddlers were made of thin wood and only good for starting fires. The lumberyards along the river front had to make their special contribution toward the coming winter and with this there always arose the tactical problem of the watchmen and their dogs. Sometimes we would catch a windfall in the nature of a deserted factory in the dock area. We would descend on it with axes, saws and crowbars and pull down beams, doors and anything else that burned.

The times were hard, and as young people we were walled up in those times. Our main thoughts were on such matters as how to raise a quarter to get to see the show at the Paramount or (and to this we devoted special attention) how to look old enough to get to see the acts at the Peoples' Burlesque on the Bowery. To me and to Red, Shifty, Chick, Algy, Meshy and Moon the world was far away. Germany was even farther away and the Nazis didn't frighten us. After all, who were they? We didn't know and we didn't care too much. (We learned over the years. We had time to think about it. We reasoned it out coming into Normandy and crossing the Siegfried Line.)

It is curious when you think back this way and then jump the twelve or fifteen years to this year. This is the strange year in which O. John Rogge is fired by Attorney General Tom Clark from the Department of Justice for making public information about some people in the United States who were pretty close to the Nazis. One of the names was that of Burton K. Wheeler, who is such a good friend of Mr. Truman that the President felt constrained, we are told, to advise Clark to junk Mr. Rogge. There were a lot of names on Rogge's list. A lot of evidence, some of it confirmed by the Nazis tried at Nuremberg, was in Rogge's hands. Rogge wanted to make it public because he felt that "*fascism is not dead in the United States. On the contrary it is now in the process of reconversion, a reconversion uncomplicated by strikes, price ceilings, or shortages. The old familiar fascist faces are once again spouting the old familiar fascist lies.*" This being true, you've got to mull over the strange action of the Department of Justice.

BETTER yet, pull out your file of NEW MASSES and flip back through the years. Let's look at the work of John L. Spivak. More than any man in America, he merits the people's warmest gratitude for his pioneering crusades against native fascism.



THE PUBLISHER of *Scribner's Commentator* is Charles S. Payson of 120 Wall St., New York, a multimillionaire interested in the steel refining business. He apparently works so closely with the America First Chapter in New York that John T. Flynn, its chairman, thought he was a member of its directing board. When I interviewed Flynn, he mistakenly told me Payson was on the board. Payson has informed some people that he held a one-third interest in the magazine. To others he said he got rid of his stock and now has no interest in it at all, though he remains listed as publisher.

Douglas M. Stewart, associate publisher and vice president of the corporation, with no money of his own to speak of, has made numerous visits to Germany since the advent of Hitler.

George T. Eggleston, who used to work for *Life* magazine, is the editor and the most active of the three. He has told some people that he has a one-third interest in the publication, others that he does not have any interest in it outside of his salary. Why these contradictory stories should be going around, I don't know. It's one of those mysterious things you find whenever you approach anything connected with or working with America First.

When Eggleston, Stewart, and the other members of the editorial staff started their round of social life in Lake Geneva, they told the already anti-Semitic community leaders that they were forced to flee New York because the city "has a Jew mayor, the Jews control the city, and the refugee elements" were making life intolerable. Both Eggleston and Stewart sought opportunities to address

Spivak revealed the pro-fascist activity of George T. Eggleston, now a Readers' Digest editor, in NM, Oct. 14, 1941.

In the Sept. 30, 1941 issue of NM Spivak exposed the America First gang. He cited the need to make fascist activity public. Comparing the activities of America First to those of the Croix de Feu, he said: "*The Croix de Feu was run by native Frenchmen, but with Nazi agents in the background. It was supported by a handful of 'big money' boys and numbered among its members active and reserve officers of the French armed forces. It, too, had a carefully filed list of all potential fascists for use at some future date, which came all too soon. An investigation of this fascist body, started by the French government, was suppressed because too many men high in the country's political and economic life were involved. The French people were never told the facts. . . .*" The tragic pattern for France was plain. It took only thirty-nine days for the local fascists to deliver their country to the Nazis when the Nazis were ready to receive it.

The dagger is still behind the cloak and it was that way in 1934 when Spivak did his series on anti-Semitism for NEW MASSES. For the first time in the United States he recorded the mechanics of betrayal. The names of such dangerous pests as James True and William Dudley Pelley were linked by Spivak to both the Nazi Embassy and to the big money interests. Spivak described in minute detail how German money and German methods were smuggled into the US by German agents and their American stooges.

In his fascist-busting articles Spivak maintained a keen sense of humor. It was apparent to him as he wrote down his account of the internal enemies of democracy that the future feuhrers were new in their roles. They had torn out a sheaf of pages from the Nazi notebook but they had not quite mastered their parts. Very often Spivak had more information about local fascist activities than the fascists them-

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selves had and they squirmed under his needling questions. For instance, there was Royal Scott Gulden, who headed the anti-Semitic "Order of '76." Spivak pounded Gulden with questions and tried to get him to admit that he had connections with the Nazis. Gulden was violent in his denials:

"We have no connections with the Nazis or the Germans in any way!" Gulden exclaimed. "We are purely an American organization . . ." At that moment the door opened and a man came in, threw his shoulders back, brought his feet together with a click and raised his hand in the Nazi salute. Gulden was embarrassed but Spivak, observing all the rules of etiquette, offered a dry and timely "Heil Hitler!"

In this article Spivak also pointed out the activities of the Nazi agent Fritz Duquesne. Seven years later Duquesne was jailed and sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment.

In the same piece there is some data on the activities of Paul Bante, who carried secret letters from Germany into the United States. Bante lived and worked out of 186 East 93rd Street, New York City. From information such as this it is possible to make an interesting movie called *The House on 92nd Street* and release it not in 1934 but in 1945. And with no screen credit to John L. Spivak.

George Sylvester Viereck was tripped up by the puppet strings which bound him to Berlin. Although Spivak presented the evidence to the country at large in 1934, it was not until war with Germany broke that Viereck was jailed. He got a small sentence—a few piddling years. Treason was, considered juridically, a small crime.

Harry A. Jung, head of the big business-supported American Vigilant Intelligence Federation, an anti-Communist, anti-labor outfit, was also nailed by Spivak in that early year. When Spivak showed Jung's connection to Nazi agents and his large scale anti-Semitic activities Jung sent an angry letter to NEW MASSES. He threatened to sue. The editors said "Sue and be damned." Naturally Jung did not sue. Why make matters worse? Nobody was prosecuting him.

Spivak probably was talking to me in his next piece, but I wasn't reading NEW MASSES at the time. While he was busy exposing the grand Nazi attempt to spread anti-Semitism and fascist ideas among the nation's youth

NOVEMBER 6, 1934
New Masses

Anti-Semitic Duet:

Easley and Viereck

Sixth Article in a Series

PLOTTING AMERICA'S POGROMS

By JOHN L. SPIVAK

through the colleges and public schools I probably was listening to a high school teacher. Maybe she was talking about history, the way it is often talked about, and maybe I was dozing. This was 1934. Spivak was waking up a lot of people but he didn't disturb me. Nobody brought NM my way.

BY THE time of the Spain days a lot of our thinking had changed. Mine did, anyway. I knew where to pick up a copy of NM, and Spivak was still there. In 1939 he weighed in with his "Silver Charlie" Coughlin series. The Spivak scalpel opened the pro-fascist cleric's real activities to the public. The high syndicate of fascist crime which ran from Coughlin to Ford was clearly documented. Homer Martin got himself caught in that Coughlin-Ford sandwich, but Martin's labor "leadership" was short-lived. Spivak showed too much. The Nazi medal which dangled from the thin chest of Henry Ford reflected in the eyes of Silver Charlie, Homer Martin and some of the other links of the conspiratorial chain.

By September of 1941 the full meaning of Hitlerism had impressed itself on the peoples of the world. In the United States the America First gang was making its big bid to strip the country of both an actual armed defense and of any moral defense. It was the largest move toward fascism until that time. Spivak hit his typewriter and NM was on the newsstands with some hot numbers during the next weeks.

It was in this series that Spivak first put the finger on George T. Eggleston and Douglas M. Stewart, who ran the mysterious *Scribner's Commentator*. Spivak showed how Henry Ford set up the machinery to build a vast mailing list for the *Commentator* and how he financed it. He also showed the connection between the editor of the anti-Semitic and pro-fascist sheet and the Nazi emissary. Lindbergh figured prominently in this deal. The fascist network was laid out like a blueprint on the pages of NM. Spivak followed the threads from top to bottom, from Avery Brundage to John T. Flynn, from Merwin K. Hart to Burton K. Wheeler, from William Dudley Pelley to Gerald P. Nye. There were other names—all of the enemies of the people present and accounted for.

The suppressed report of O. John Rogge points again to the activity of *Scribner's Commentator* and brings further information that the *Commentator* was directly subsidized by the Nazis. Douglas M. Stewart's innocent testimony had been that large amounts

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIII DECEMBER 12, 1939 NUMBER 12

Coughlin and Ford

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Rivaling the Black Legion as a labor fighter, Silver Charlie Coughlin uses his church connections to split the UAW. The payoff: from Ford to Coughlin to Martin. Building the Shrine of the Little Flower with underpaid scab labor.

AT 2:30 in the afternoon of Feb. 9, 1939, [illegible] and is today Harry Bennett, head of the Ford [illegible]

Seven years ago Spivak exposed the union-busting, anti-Semitic alliance of Coughlin and the Ford Motor Co.

of money were thrown through his window by persons unknown to him. Since Mr. Eggleston has moved over to the *Readers' Digest* as an editor, it would be of great interest to know precisely what services Eggleston rendered to the Nazis. It would also be interesting to know why the *Readers' Digest* employed Eggleston, whose record and activities against the nation's interests are well known. Without a doubt the readers of the *Digest* would like some sort of explanation. How, exactly, does pro-fascist George T. Eggleston fit into the reactionary program of the *Digest*? Maybe editor DeWitt Wallace can say, or maybe he doesn't want to.

This much is obvious: not only is Rogge right when he warns that the fascists are not out of business, but the network of fascist treason which John L. Spivak disclosed so many years ago on these pages still exists. Unless the Department of Justice is forced to change its plans regarding the Rogge report and the trial of the fascist "seditionists," the network of fascism will be kept intact.

IT SEEMS like a long time since 1932 and the cycle has turned full. The party of Roosevelt, so impaired since his death, has been pushed from national control by the Republicans. The fond hope of the Nazis has come to pass. The Republican victory is being taken by the fascists and reactionaries as the signal to start moving again.

John L. Spivak was, I suppose, like many of us, a "pre-mature" anti-fascist. O. John Rogge is being looked at as a sort of "post-mature" anti-fascist. The prefixes applied to anti-fascists only support the view that the fight against fascism is a steady proposition and that the proposition remains open —especially here in our country.

They fired Rogge. We are glad that he is continuing his fight. They have tried to fire NEW MASSES many times in the past, to gag an accusing voice. They failed because too many people were ready to rally in support of a crusading journal, fighting against reaction.

I have spoken about the past only to cast light on the tasks of today and to show that the shadows of the past have not been dispelled. NEW MASSES now has a bigger job to do than ever before —there's old business and new business on its agenda for action. Last week Joe North told you that NM needs your help *now*. Needs your help to make possible the very life of the magazine. And now, more than ever, the people need NM.

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portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

The Republicans now have control of Congress. The election results, it seems, have put a plague on both our Houses.

●

Upton Close, plugging Senator Bricker for President, describes him as "down-to-earth." Less enthusiastic supporters maintain that he isn't down far enough.

●

Lord Halifax announces that he will sell his mansion and move into the stables. Halifax now has an opportunity to establish something in common with the other end of the horse too.

●

Paul Griffith, the American Legion Commander, says that admitting refugees to this country would be a "menace" to veterans. That role is evidently considered a monopoly of Legion Commanders.

●

The UN has a device that translates speeches into six different languages. The only thing the gadget can't do is eliminate Byrnes' doubletalk.

●

Argentina has agreed to buy $100,000 worth of Franco bonds. In five years the bonds are expected to be worth almost twice that amount in Confederate money.

●

London sources say that Bevin may soon resign because of poor health. His heart is said to be failing almost as rapidly as his foreign policy.

●

"The Readers' Digest" is planning a German language edition. Even non-Nazis will now have the opportunity to take poison.

●

The vets insist that the Republicans have failed to promote a real housing program in New York. The GOP replies to these charges with Dewey-eyed innocence.

●

The cost of living in Japan averages forty times what it was in 1937. Some observers attribute the situation to an improper Diet.

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review and comment

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

WOMAN OF THE PHARISEES, *by Francois Mauriac. Translated by Gerald Hopkins. Holt. $2.50.*

"WOMAN OF THE PHARISEES" deals with a favorite and well-worn subject of French novelists from Balzac to Proust and Aragon, the sink-hole of sexual relations in the upper class families of France. Aragon presents these aberrations as a class problem, deriving from his characters' place in the world, their money, leisure and power. To Mauriac, however, the problems of his characters, their dissatisfactions with one another, their hypocrisies and infidelities, are problems of universal humanity. Their maladjustments are part of the external war of sin against sanctity. This book is a morality drama of sex and religion.

The jacket says of this book that "it was written during the German occupation, and is Mauriac's latest novel, but it shows no sign of war strain." This is not quite true. There is no sign of the war in its subject matter; the time is the first decade of the present century. But there is a definite sense of strain in the book. Mauriac, at least in gathering his select material, is a realist. He feels free to give his opinions and interpretations but he does not distort facts. That is his genuine strength as a novelist. And this remains a deeply troubled book, for it is a religious plea to the upper classes to reform themselves, and yet shows no conviction that they will.

The story is told in the first person, by a boy in his teens. The "Woman of the Pharisees" is his stepmother, arrogant in her sense of religious purity, vindictive against all who offend her, keen to pry into the secrets of everyone near her, and determined to smash any love or affection people about her may display. Unhappy herself, all happiness to her is a sin. She is obviously neurotic, although the author does not favor a psychiatric line of approach. He treats her rather as a problem in false, pharisaical religion, in contrast to the true religion based upon love.

The boy himself turns into something of a prig and a neurotic under his stepmother's influence. His sister falls in love with his school friend, the son of a countess; the boy, violently jealous, feels pleased when his stepmother break up the love affair. Another revealing character is the countess, who is a widow, a beautiful woman, a profligate and liar. One of the tragic scenes in the book comes when her son, who adores her, discovers her true character. Nobody in this book lives a normal or satisfactory family life.

Raphael Soyer.

Against these unhappy characters the author presents a Catholic priest, a man of considerable estate who lives quietly, attempting through tutoring to bring children up in decency and love of God. He also, however, is not settled in mind. Having dedicated himself to God and denied himself a family, he looks upon his young pupils as a substitute for his lost sons. And he too falls into error, the error of believing that he can influence people. It is Mauriac's central thesis that people are deluded in believing that they can bring about change in the world. Their battles must always be private ones, fought out within themselves. The characters in this book to whom he is least forgiving and most harsh are the "liberals," who commit the sin of reading Juares.

What is the conclusion to this dismal picture of people clawing at each other? The priest is ruined by the Pharisee, who hates him for defending her step-daughter. Although at the end she sees the wrong she has done to him she cannot help him, and he dies firm in his faith but misunderstood by everyone. The teller of the story, after a half-hearted attempt at marriage, decides to live a life of celibacy. His sister marries the son of the countess, but without much promise of happiness in the relationship. The Pharisee, her eyes opened to the egoism and falsehood in her concept of religion, reforms and humiliates herself, becoming less harmful to others but hardly less confused or more sensible. Finally she is comforted with the belief that becomes the moral of the book. "Our Father does not ask us to give a scrupulous account of what merits we can claim. She understood at last that it is not our deserts that matter but our love."

"Love" is a powerful word and its effect, at the end not only of a sentence but of a whole novel, is to send the reader into a state of sublimity in which thought dissolves into blissful self-satisfaction. But reality makes harsh demands. We must ask: whom does the author love, and therefore whom does he hate? There is no love apart from hate, and a romanticist, universal, all-embracing "love" generally hides a universal, concrete, all-embracing hate. It is apparent that with all respect for Mauriac's unhappy search for something he can love, or

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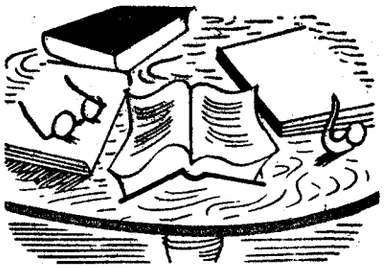

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for a feeling of love, his hates encompass pretty much all of society—the common people, who appear only in a contemptible light; the middle classes; the upper classes. It is almost the suicide of humanity that he advocates, with his picture of the unhappy results that come when people try to establish affectionate relations with each other. The few people to whom he is the most forgiving are precisely those who do the most harm to society, who are most selfish, vicious and destructive. In the social context of his novel, the harm these people do is limited. A generation later, however, such people sold out France.

Such anti-social perversions destroy Mauriac as both a thinker and artist. He is a most accomplished writer. Few novelists of our time can put so many characters, seen vividly in their inner as well as outer life, within so short a book, or write dialogue so natural, yet so lean and economical. Not seeing his characters as a segment of society with its own patterns, seeing them solely as isolated individuals, he allows most of them to drift pointlessly out of the book, leaving the story of the reform of the Pharisee as its only unifying element. Her reform has no point, for her final attainment of "love" has no value to anyone. The value that remains in this book is that since Mauriac is still an artist of honesty, in terms of his craft, he has revealed his own accumulated hates and slackened grip upon reality. It is not a pleasant picture.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

American Economics

THE ECONOMIC MIND IN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION, 1606-1865, *by Joseph Dorfman. Viking. 2 vols. $7.50.*

THIS colossal work, comprising half a million words, represents a summation of twelve years' intensive research into formally expressed conceptions of economic theory in America during the first two and a half centuries of its existence. As such it concerns itself with a facet of the nation's intellectual life which is largely lacking in the studies of Parrington and Curti, and joins their works as an indispensable tool—when carefully used—for anyone interested in the history of the United States.

Here will be found succinct biographies and generous summations of the economic thinking of not only such figures as Winthrop, Penn, Franklin, Paine, Hamilton, Jefferson, Greeley and Lincoln, but also of less well-known though highly significant individuals like George Logan, Justus Bollman, Thomas Cooper, Josiah Warren, Henry Carey, Louisa McCord, Nathaniel Ware and dozens more. All this is presented, so far as this reviewer has been able to determine, with a notable absence of factual inaccuracy.

By way of interpretation, too, there is much in this work that will upset most of the present-day academicians. Dorfman is keenly aware of the fact that early theorists of capitalism bluntly asserted their devotion to a hierarchical type of society, frankly avowed the exploitive nature of their system, and "remained essentially unreconciled" to any type of real democracy. And he notes, by way of projecting what will surely be a major theme in the continuation of this study, that the masters of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries retained this point of view but became "far more circumspect" in their manner of expressing it.

It is unfortunate that, in a work of this importance, the style of expression is exceedingly awkward and tedious, amounting frequently to page after page of mere paraphrasing of involved, prolix and clumsy passages containing material of interest only to antiquarians. One often has the feeling that he is reading the research notes gathered by the author rather than his own digested and weighed analyses thereof. This is the more difficult to understand when one recalls the relatively incisive and happy styling of the same writer's *Veblen.*

A more serious failing in the work, however, concerns one of its basic theses. This holds that since, during most of the period covered by the book, there was very little serious formal questioning of the roots of societal organization, that is, the private ownership of the means of production and distribution, it follows, therefore, that the conflicting opinions and parties, the campaigns and struggles, the outbreaks and revolutions that marked these centuries were rather superficial and personal, were rather "primarily conflicts of financial interests and personal political ambitions," and mere "factional disputes within the ruling oligarchy."

This same point of view is carried over into Dorfman's evaluation of personalities. We cite but two examples—there are others: First, the reader is

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asked to believe that Thomas Cooper's "break with Jefferson was really in form, not in spirit." This is certainly a strange way to characterize the renegacy of Cooper, a renegacy that earned him the presidency of South Carolina College. This quondam radical ended his career by defending the decency, propriety and morality of Negro enslavement, branding the doctrines of human equality and natural rights as vicious lies, urging the rich forcibly to suppress any stirrings of the poor, accepting subsidies from bank president Nicholas Biddle (the Morgan of his day), and secretly offering to manage a campaign to make Biddle President of the United States. Surely this behavior represents a rather complete and not merely a formal break with Jefferson!

Again, the reader is introduced to an Abraham Lincoln "hardly differing from [Stephan A.] Douglas," to a Lincoln characterized as "a Hamiltonian in social and political views." Certainly, if there was no difference between the Lincoln of the revolutionary Republican Party and the Douglas of the dormant and doddering Democratic Party of the Civil War generation, then concepts and words have lost all reality, and book-writing is a worthless occupation. And if Alexander Hamilton, that cold and calculating snob, that pleader for a hereditary monarchy, for whom—as Dorfman himself aptly says—"liberty is freedom to acquire and keep wealth; equality is nonsense," and to whom "the people is a great beast," if this individual is the ideological godfather of the author of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Gettysburg Address, and the letter to the workingmen of Manchester, England, then once again the reality of distinctions and differences has indeed disappeared, and Joseph Goebbels and Franz Boas were intellectual comrades.

Dorfman has failed, I believe, to retain a historical sense. The issues of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were not, and could not be, those of our epoch. But this does not make them any less real and fundamental, *for their period*, than are the basic issues of the present century. The questions of the divine right of kings, of entail and primogeniture, of separation of church and state, of feudal land tenure, of quit rents, of chattel slavery, of the right of workers to organize, of imprisonment for debt, of public education, while in today's United States not—at least avowedly—issues, were very live and very fundamental issues some generations ago, and not mere "factional struggles within the ruling oligarchy."

One must remember, too, in using Dorfman's work, that it is largely, though not entirely, devoted to an investigation of the *formal*, even academic, economic mind in American civilization, and not to the expressions of the economic thinking of the rank and file of such mass movements as the Bacon, Regulator, Shays, Whiskey, Fries, and anti-rent insurrections, nor that behind such organizations as the Workingmen's, Free Soil or Abolitionist societies.

Bearing these fundamental criticisms in mind, it remains true that this work is an outstanding contribution to American historiography, and for the prodigious labor involved in its compilation we are all very much in the author's debt.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

World Tour

WHILE TIME REMAINS, *by Leland Stowe. Knopf. $3.*

"WHILE TIME REMAINS" undertakes a "tour of our revolutionary world" in an attempt to understand the role of an America which has emerged as "the strong man" from the holocaust of war. On this tour—which includes an examination of the Soviet Union as a great power, an analysis of political and economic trends in Europe, a dissection of fascism in South America and in Europe and a discussion of the complex that is Asia—Stowe concludes that "socialism," as exemplified by the British Labor government, is the new middle ground in Europe. And, he prophecies, "We can turn our attention to this new Europe, which is as surely the cradle of our Western nations' future as it has been the cradle of our past."

Much of *While Time Remains* is devoted to the need of mass education for peace and world citizenship, and to a discussion of American atom bomb policy. Stowe advocates international control of the bomb, and the development, through international cooperation, of a world in which there is no need to resort to war. This leads to his blueprint for world government, which involves the responsibility of this nation to produce "international spe-

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cialists who will maintain a continuity for the voice of America, France, China and every other country."

The book is a plea for a loose, liberal democracy in which "intelligent conservatives" had better take heed. Note the handwriting on the wall, he says, and compromise. Throw your weight behind the Socialists, for — and he quotes Pertinax, a French political Rightist ". . . they (the Socialists) are no longer dangerous innovators. . . . They operate as a barrier against the Communist revolution on the one side and against the Vichy reaction on the other. . . . The Socialists nowadays are the new center party."

Extreme reaction having failed, "socialism" is substituted for "conservatism." This is not illogical for the Socialists in England and the United States have become the professional anti-revolutionaries. Under the gleaming escutcheon of "socialism" the British Labor government maintains the classic Tory foreign policy. What could be a more attractive hoax for American capital than to streamline itself thus and continue business at the same old stand?

While Time Remains is shot through with liberal contradictions. In appraising the Soviet Union, Stowe recognizes with admiration the phenomenal achievements of that socialist society, and proves the efficacy of state ownership.

But then something goes wrong. For though he is astute enough to realize that "capitalism as we have known it is going to go under, or blow up," he balks at the inevitable conclusion. Instead he invents all sorts of half-measures and generalities as "answers" to communism. For example he says hopefully, "We need not assume that necessarily any great amount of state ownership need become imperative in America; certainly not in any predictable future—if we put our own economic house in much better order than it has been in this century." He suggests that "we make democracy *better*, and make it *more democratic* . . . not with policemen but with jobs, production, and a fairer distribution of the benefits of democracy."

But Stowe's appeal for peace, production, jobs and democracy is directed to the very class whose main interests lie in just the opposite direction. He speaks of democracy without one reference to the historic peoples' struggles in this direction. This naive approach to "men of good will" on domestic problems leads directly to his fantastic oversimplification of American foreign policy, which he attributes to mere political immaturity and slipshod economic thought. To explain away American atom bomb policy by comparing it to an adolescent flexing his muscles in public is sheer frivolity. And if Mr. Stowe would look sharply, he could see in a minute that there is nothing frivolous in this deliberate scheme of monopoly capitalism.

HENRIETTA SIEGEL.

A Man and his Country

BOY FROM NEBRASKA: The Story of Ben Kuroki, *by Ralph G. Martin. Harpers.* $2.50.

THIS is the story of the one-man war that Ben Kuroki, an American of Japanese descent, waged on four fronts —in Europe, in the Pacific, in the barracks and orderly rooms of the US Army Air Force, and at home in the United States. Not quite fiction and not quite biography, *Boy from Nebraska* was written by ex-*Stars and Stripes* correspondent Ralph Martin, from Sgt. Kuroki's memories and war diaries.

Ben Kuroki, along with his nine brothers and sisters, was raised on a farm in Hershey, Nebraska, where rations were short but community acceptance of the Nisei family wholehearted and unquestioning. It wasn't until Pearl Harbor that the anti-Japanese prejudice, a staple on the West Coast, reached Ben's town. Ben, with another young Nisei, tried to enlist in the Army. The boys got in on their second try—at the first place they were turned down because of their descent—and promptly found out what it was like to live in a two-man ghetto. On the way to camp the other soldiers were so hostile that the two friends decided it would be better for them not to sit together. Once at camp, it was worse. "None of the hundred and twenty men in the barrack ever talked to them, nobody ever smiled at them, nobody ever even said hello."

Ben's Nisei buddy was transferred out of the Air Corps without explanation, and Ben was on his way out when an eleventh hour appeal to his commanding officer saved him. Ben wanted to get into combat—to "show everybody that we've got as much guts as anyone else"—but when the squadron got its embarkation orders, his name was on a list of soldiers to be transferred out, and if it hadn't been for the last-minute intervention of his first sergeant he wouldn't have been on the ship.

On his third try Ben landed a job as tail-gunner on a B-24, and found that prejudices are speedily dispersed by flak.

After flying five more missions than he was required to, Ben went home to national fame, soft hotel beds . . . and more prejudice. His appearance on a nationwide radio show was cancelled at the last minute by orders from an NBC executive who thought "the Japanese-American question . . . too controversial."

When Ben asked for service in the Pacific, the merry-go-round started over again. He was in until a directive from Washington ordered him out, in again when protest from his officers and the public moved Secretary Stimson to change his mind, nearly out for the count when an FBI official tried to grab him off the plane just before take-off.

In the Pacific Ben fought the enemy outside and the fear inside, and —so well is the work of division among us done—was stabbed by a drunken American soldier of Indian descent. When he came home his nationwide lecture tour was rather marred by the incident of the young lady at Travelers' Aid who prefaced her telephone requests for a hotel room for him by asking, "Will you accept a Japanese-American?"

Mr. Martin tells Sgt. Kuroki's story in the style of reportage-with-emotion that seems to have become the classical American idiom of World War II, and tells it very well indeed. He makes no attempt to trace the prejudice to its roots, and only in passing ties up the Japanese-fear with the other minority-fears in America. He simply tells his story without punch-pulling and lets the facts speak for themselves. Fortunately, the facts have good, loud voices, and Mr. Martin an eloquent, acute and frequently moving pen.

MARJORIE BARRETT.

Irene Goldberg.

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sights and sounds

FILMS OF THE WEEK

HOWARD HUGHES' *The Outlaw* has had as much publicity as a major United Nations dispute. Both the Catholic Legion of Decency and the Production Code Administration of the Motion Picture Association of America (Johnson Office) denounced the film's advertising and the film itself, which they called immoral, inhuman and sacrilegious. When both these guardians of purity thumb a picture down, it is usually finished; but Hughes, spending money like a drunken capitalist, hired theaters, made deals with independent theater operators, and managed to get it shown around the country despite the absence of the PCA seal of approval. Finally, after months of ballyhoo and conflict, *The Outlaw* was ready for the supershow business area, the metropolitan district of New York. United Artists, the distributors, obtained the necessary blessing from the New York state censors, and then the ads and billboards appeared throughout the city proclaiming the glad tidings. At last we would be permitted a look at the embattled classic. Three theaters, the Gotham, the Rialto and the Republic, were readied and anointed, like virgin brides, for the great moment.

But it never came off. The Messrs. Fielding and Wallender of the Licensing and Police Departments, respectively, issued a stern ukase to the theater owners warning them that if they showed the film their licenses would be revoked. A number of people detected the fine hand of the Legion of Decency behind this high-handed action, but I have no proof that this was so. Such behavior from city officials is rare, if not unknown (though licenses have been revoked from burlesque houses), especially when the state board of censors has previously approved of the production. Yet even if this city censorship sets no precedent, it constitutes an extremely dangerous practice. It leaves the final approval of a theater or movie presentation, after all the usual censorships have been consulted, in the hands of individuals who can make decisions based solely on their own individual tastes. The two commissioners objected in large part to the advertising of the film, although the local ads, aside from their loudness and largeness, were only in ordinary bad taste. The only adjective used was the word "daring," and this word has not yet, to my knowledge, joined the company of the lewd and the lascivious.

Unfortunately the censorship issue has arisen over a film that can be defended only with the greatest reluctance. Hughes' attempt to introduce sex into the Westerns was prompted by a desire on his part to bring the Westerns up to date: that is, to make a box-office certainty out of the same objectionable movie mores that dominate other types of themes. In this he has succeeded. Instead of being more noticeably lewd and vulgar than the average sweater-girl feature, the picture is merely a dull, witless one that outrages American frontier history and the cannons of acting, writing and good taste. The advertising is only come-on stuff, no better or worse than the usual low-grade exploitation of the average Hollywood product. To match the ads there is a bit of hugger-mugger in an unlit barn where the heroine and the young hero-desperado struggle for the possession of a loose gun. Admittedly the girl's bra is the chief actor in the scene, but the darkness is punctuated by slaps and curses to indicate that the close body work is not all that it appears to be. There is also the scene wherein the hero, dangerously wounded, needs heat or he will die. Lacking all other methods for keeping him warm, the girl volunteers to get into bed with him. This is supposed to parallel the act of a lady tearing up her bustle to make bandages for the wounded. To allay the suspicions of some people, the boy is kept in a stupor while all this is going on. Nevertheless, even the heroine's hard-bitten aunt is a leetle shocked. The girl therefore marries the outlaw, stupor and all, to make the aunt happy.

At this point I can imagine the following bit of conversation taking place between the producers and the censors:

CENSORS: Getting into bed with the outlaw is indecent and obscene **and tends to corrupt the morals** of the youth of the country.

PRODUCERS: But she marries him.

C: Only to satisfy her aunt. She marries without any moral conviction. Therefore the picture violates the marriage sacrament.

P: But the man doesn't know she's there; he's unconscious.

C: But the audience isn't.

That, I suppose, would settle it, except that the final argument, especially after the first reel, indicates a sublime confidence in the laws of improbability.

A NEW pattern, making pure votaries of culture out of our theatrical heroes, is beginning to emerge in the Hollywood musical biography. At first there was George Gershwin who was so wedded to his art that he had no room for marriage. And now we have Al Jolson (*The Jolson Story*, at the Music Hall) who is so wrapped up in song that he must sing day and night, with neither time nor inclination for any other interest. Naturally this makes for moments of sheer poignance, since the wife wants only peace, a home in the country, and an end to show business. When you consider that Jolson's wife was no fireside-loving housewife, but Ruby Keeler, the Ziegfeld star who also made a couple of movies, the plot becomes even sillier, if possible.

Time was when the travail between the principals was nothing more than the routine skirmishes that attended the cinema battles of love, but this new twist, in which the boy may meet but never get the girl, is an attempt to stick to actual biographical fact. Everybody knows that Gershwin never married, and that Jolson parted from his wife, but it would be naive to expect the movies to explore the maladjustments and neuroses that plagued Gershwin or the factors that make for instability in marriage. The art *vs.* life formula is more romantic and gives our heroes the sheen of nobility.

One noteworthy thing about *The*

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Jolson Story is the introduction of Larry Parks, a rising Columbia star, who shows much sensitivity and personal charm. It is a pity that he has to expend so much energy imitating the Jolson variety of ham as he pantomimes to Jolson's sound track. He executes his chores with consistent skill, and if you had never heard Jolson sing, you could easily imagine that the voice as well as the gestures belonged to Parks.

The Jolson Story contains more honorable intentions than any other picture of recent date. It attempts to create unity among the various faiths by showing Jolson first singing in an orthodox synagogue where his father is cantor, and then practising with a choir in a Catholic church where an escapade has landed him. In these early scenes his father is handled with dignity and sympathy, but he soon degenerates into an Abie's-Irish-Rose character, a buffoon who becomes the comic relief to the fake emotional issues of the story. The film also attempts to treat jazz with the honesty and importance it deserves. Jolson is supposed to be so moved by the folk feeling of the music that he refuses to sing unless they will allow him to use the jazz idiom. As soon as he gets his way, however, his jazz becomes sentimental Tin Pan Alley of the stalest variety. ("Mammy," "Rockaby My Baby," etc.)

"BLUE SKIES" (Paramount) while concentrating on one composer's music—Irving Berlin's—as does *Night and Day* and the others, is different in that it does not deal either with the composer or any known theatrical figure. However, it is saddled with an equally silly plot, in which Bing Crosby buys and sells night clubs like a man possessed. This causes a rupture between him and his wife, who would just as soon make for herself a little burrow in any one of the spots he owns. It makes for endless ridiculous business that not only tests your liking for Crosby's singing and Astaire's dancing but attempts to make actors out of the principals. You never saw anything sadder.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

ON BROADWAY

IN THE Nineties, in Ireland, following the defeats of the land rebellion and the disillusionment in home rule as doled out by the British parliament, the energies of the people, outside the labor movement, went into a cultural rebirth. The Irish renascence, like all such movements, searched backward into the national past, culminating in the revival of Gaelic and forward into new artistic creation culminating in the establishment of an Irish national theater.

Believing these to be harmless outlets for energies that might be more dangerously occupied, the British authorities tolerated them. But the cultural revival had powers that the British masters misjudged. By these powers the Irish people were pulled out of their depression and given heart for new struggles.

Considered in this light we can understand the significance of *The Playboy of the Western World,* a folk play which first offended Irish audiences but has survived as one of the classics of the Irish theater. Synge had no conscious satirical intentions and was startled by the furor he provoked. Eventually the play triumphed over the squeamish and the short-sighted, not only because of its beauty but because it gave artistic expression to the unhappy truth about life in all oppressed peasant lands, the truth summarized in Lenin's phrase, "the idiocy of village life." The situation on which the play is built is accountable through that idiocy—the pleased excitement caused in a back-country village by the appearance of a supposed murderer. But many things are revealed in the course of that excitement, glimpses of frustrated aspirations, glimpses of the manhood that flows into the cowed after the chance of liberation.

Synge was persuaded back from Paris by Yeats to steep himself in the poetry of his people and take part in their cultural revival. Through powers of poetic assimilation, unparalleled in the history of literature, this man of cosmopolitan culture became the most native voice in the renascent culture of Ireland. With a living quality beyond the reach of scholars he drew out the poetry of his people.

This was Synge's conscious aim as he describes it in his introduction to

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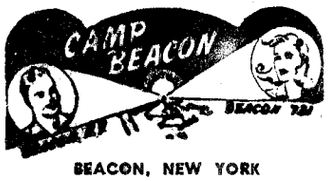

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the printed version of *The Playboy of the Western World*:

". . . I have used one or two words only that I have not heard among the country people of Ireland, or spoken in my own nursery before I could read the newspapers. A certain number of the phrases I employ I have heard also from herds and fishermen along the coast from Kerry to Mayo, or from beggar-women and ballad singers nearer Dublin; and I am glad to acknowledge how much I owe to the folk-imagination of these fine people.

"Anyone who has lived in real intimacy with the Irish peasantry will know that the wildest sayings and ideas in this play are tame indeed compared with the fancies one may hear in any little hillside cabin in Geesula, or Carraroe or Dingle Bay. All art is a collaboration; and there is little doubt that in the happy ages of literature, striking and beautiful phrases were as ready to the story teller's or the playwright's hand as the rich cloaks and dresses of his time. It is probable that when the Elizabethan dramatist took his ink-horn and sat down to his work he used many phrases that he had just heard, as he sat down to dinner, from his mother or his children. In Ireland those of us who know the people have the same privilege. When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen*, some years ago, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow House where I was staying that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen."

Although the other writers of the Irish Renaissance consciously attempted the same collaboration with the Irish people, none succeeded so remarkably as Synge.

The Playboy of the Western World is an auspicious opening for Theater Incorporated, which expects to develop into a repertory company. The ensemble acting is excellent. While Burgess Meredith did not quite realize the transformation from worm to wings that his role as the playboy called for, it was well integrated with the other performances, which make *The Playboy* one of the best acted plays in town.

Mildred Natwick as Widow Quin, Eithne Dunne as Pegeen, and J. M. Kerrigan, Fred Johnson and J. C. Nugent are particularly good; and Guthrie McClintic's staging of the

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play, within John Boyt's effective set, is very skillful.

THE press agents for *Made in Heaven*, Hagar Wilde's comedy of wedlock in these United States, have furnished reviewers with some depressing statistics. Marriage mortality is now over thirty percent, and a fifty percent rate is anticipated. Judging from Miss Wilde's examples the surviving marriages carry on because the separation settlement would come to more than the husband is willing to shell out, because drink can anesthetize you to the matrimonial anguish or because being alone is even harder to bear. So far as Miss Wilde has any solution it is that a little patience, for God's sake, will get you over hurdles and that the quarrels, as she produces dialogue to testify, are pointless, anyway. The audience, laughing in responsive recognition, indicated that the stage spats were faithful to the actual ones. But the realities underneath that break out in the spats remain submerged. Miss Wilde's insights are entirely at the keyhole level. The play was given about everything it had by a competent cast, with Donald Cook and Carmen Matthews as the principal couple and Ann Thomas effective as the impromptu other woman.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

MUSIC

THE fresh wind blowing through New York music comes from the City Center Symphony, where a young conductor, Leonard Bernstein, is leading a young orchestra before a youthful audience listening with interest and delight to unfamiliar music. The Copland Piano Concerto, which was written in 1926 and which Leo Smits performed with the orchestra on October 21, is not the "jazz concerto" it pretends to be. A jazz musician would be filled with contempt at the infantile, labored off-beat rhythm, the senseless dissonances, the raucous and whining brass that did nothing but send titters through the audience. But in spite of such passages, which showed only the ignorance of jazz that prevailed in musical circles during the "jazz decade," the work was a pleasure to hear.

There was a great deal of sensitive and imaginative writing for piano and

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orchestra in Copland's more personal idiom. Copland used jazz as Milhaud, Stravinsky and Prokofieff used other national idioms during that decade. It was a jumping-off place for their own desires to write music that was alternately nostalgic and orgiastic, rather than an investigation of the human and melodic qualities that lay within these apparently strange idioms. The work, granted the bad taste of its jazz sections, still stands up and indicates how capable a composer Copland was twenty years ago.

This may sound like a strange statement, but the Haydn piano concerto in D Major, which Leo Smits played brilliantly on the same program, was far nearer to some aspects of jazz music than the Copland work. Haydn's music, of course, has neither the blues melody nor the jazz beat and instrumentation. But the delicate arabesques over the reiterated themes, so much like improvisations, the cross-rhythms, the sensitive clash of tone colors, are some of the qualities that good jazz attains within its own idiom.

The "Rounds for String Orchestra," by David Diamond, which Artur Rodzinski introduced to New York Philharmonic audiences, was the most likable work I have heard from this composer. Diamond is one of the school which believes that music should have no connection to the emotional experiences of everyday life, or the portrayal of human beings, and his music generally sounds like it for all its professional quality. The "Rounds" however were tuneful music, using Americanisms such as Copland employed in his "Appalachian Spring," and were worked out in three contrasting movements like a Bach concerto. The counterpoint kept going out of its own melodic momentum, the rhythmic tricks generally had an expressive reason for being, and the entire work was fully of a juicy gaiety.

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